



THE INDEPENDENT

FRIDAY 3 MAY 1996

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Bath vs Wigan: the clash of two cultures

A match across the North-South divide

How to spot the car that's clocked

On the road

Meet pop music's Tony Hancock

Why Robert Smith is glad to be glum



EU poll backs Major view as seats tumble

Voters split on single currency

DONALD MACINTYRE
Political Editor

John Major's strategy of leaving open the issue of a single currency has been vindicated by confidential new poll findings which show that voters are in two minds about European monetary union.

The research shows that while 71 per cent would vote against joining monetary union in a referendum now, 69 per cent would consider the possibility of joining later if the issue were left open.

The poll will bring some comfort to the Tory high command in the wake of last night's heavy losses in the local elections. It shows a large majority of voters want to retain the possibility of joining a single currency some time in the future.

The unpublished poll for the European Commission shows that 71 per cent would vote against joining monetary union in a referendum - a markedly higher figure than the 58 per cent recorded in a MORI poll for the Sun newspaper earlier this week.

The findings, which are now circulating in Whitehall, help to explain the confidence with which the Prime Minister said on Monday that a referendum would vote against a single currency if it were held today.

But pro-Europeans will take considerably more comfort from the surprise finding that more than two-thirds answer "yes" to the question of whether a "decision should be left open with the possibility of joining later".

The finding that 69 per cent - compared with 56 per cent last June - of electors want the op-

tion kept open will be seen as suggesting that a referendum on a government proposal to join a single currency could still be winnable - particularly if the decision was taken to join as part of a "second wave" once European monetary union has been in operation for a period.

A number of ministers, including Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health, have been arguing in private that Britain is much likelier to join a single currency in the second wave and it would be more desirable for it to do so, if it joins at all.

The poll also shows that British electors are remarkably unsentimental about the issue of whether the Queen's head should on one side of the planned euro notes and coins if the UK joins a single currency. While 13 per cent say it would make them more favourably inclined towards a single currency and 5 per cent less so, 82 per cent say it would make no difference.

The unexpectedly deep vein of hostility will encourage Eurosceptics who have been stepping up the pressure on Mr Major over the past few weeks, culminating in a strong hint that members of the right-wing 92 Group will include personal commitments not to support a single currency in their election addresses.

But it also shows that Mr Major's determination not to yield to pressure and rule out a single currency has equally enthusiastic support from voters, which comes as a fillip after a miserable local election campaign which has been overshadowed by the party's divisions over Europe.

It also suggests that in the longer term the issue of a single currency may more open than many Euro-sceptics would hope. It also comes amid signs that senior pro-Europeans in the party are to adopt a more robust line in pressing their arguments - against the Euro-phobe wing in the party. That was signalled last weekend when Douglas Hurd, the former Foreign Secretary, urged pro-Europeans not to hold back in arguing their corner.

Meanwhile, in a move which may irritate Euro-sceptics, Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, has appointed as a special adviser Anthony Teasdale, former special adviser to Lord Howe when he was Foreign Secretary. Mr Teasdale, who was more recently head of the Tory MEPs' London office, and then the MEPs' senior political adviser in Europe, is a strong pro-European.

A new poll for the European newspaper shows that opposition to a single European currency is rising in Germany, as well as in Britain, despite Chancellor Helmut Kohl's eagerness for the project.

Some 52 per cent of voters in Germany are now against the idea, up from 50 per cent two years ago, even though Bonn is one of the scheme's keenest supporters.

Support for the scheme has fallen from 45 per cent to 40 per cent, and the lead for the "No" vote in Germany is now 12 points, up seven points since 1994, according to the MORI poll. Britons are still showing the greatest resistance to the idea, however.

Now you are a councillor, page 17

Hoddle aims to play from the heart



MARK BURTON

It aged Bobby Robson and subjected Graham Taylor to many a cruel lampoon - so it was perhaps understandable that Glenn Hoddle looked pensive and grimly determined as he was presented yesterday as the next coach of the England football team.

At 38, Hoddle is the youngest man to be given the task of establishing England as one of the world's leading teams once again.

"My ambition is to be successful, playing in a manner which is close to my heart and I believe to the public's heart as well," said Hoddle, who as an eight-year-old made a banner to parade around the streets of his home town of Harlow, Essex, proclaiming England's World Cup victory in 1966.

It is the qualifying campaign for the 1998 World Cup finals in France that will be his immediate concern when he inherits the job from Terry Venables after this summer's European Championship in England.

"We believe that Glenn has a similar football philosophy to Terry and that's a big plus," Graham Kelly, the Football Association's chief executive, said when announcing the appointment at a news conference in a west London hotel.

Hoddle, who made his name playing for Tottenham Hotspur in the late Seventies and early Eighties, was widely regarded as the most gifted footballer of his generation. Although he played 53 times for England that was nothing like as many international appearances as his many admirers, at home and abroad, thought he should have made.

At the time it was often suggested that the England team should have been built around his ability to direct play with his easy, graceful style and perceptive passing. As Hoddle said yesterday: "If Terry had been manager when I was playing, I think I would have won a lot more caps - he would have brought out the best in me."

After five years in football club management, having had some success in cup competitions with Chelsea, he now has the opportunity to bring out the best in England's current crop of players.

News Analysis, page 15
Sport, page 28

Setting out his goals: Glenn Hoddle describes his plans for England yesterday

Photograph: Robert Hallam

Wimpy puts British beef on menu

WILL BENNETT
and COLIN BROWN



Farmers received some rare good news yesterday when the Wimpy fast-food chain said it would put British beef back on the menu. It was removed after the start of the BSE ("mad-cow") crisis five weeks ago.

But the Government culling scheme, designed to restore faith in British beef, failed to get under way yesterday, with farmers and slaughterhouse operators accusing ministers of presiding over a farce. Destruction of 21,000 cattle a week as part of efforts to eradicate BSE from British herds had been due to start yesterday.

after being postponed from Monday. Confusion over the scheme to remove animals aged over 30 months from the food chain led to allegations in the Commons yesterday that the Government was inept.

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, said the measures, introduced by Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, had led to confusion and appeared "pretty inept".

John Major said detailed information would be sent today to farmers, but Labour leaders said the confusion increased the impression of the Government having lost its grip in the crisis. In an attempt to reassure his authority, Mr Major yesterday

signalled that the Government was considering a show of anger by calling in ambassadors of European Union countries to protest if the EU refuses to lift the export ban on British beef.

Welcoming the move by Wimpy, Mr Major told MPs he would consider the call by Sir Cranley Ouslow - one of the Tory MPs who sent a joint protest to the ambassadors on Wednesday - for the diplomats to be called in to bear British protests if the ban were not lifted next week.

Ministers said last night there would be intolerable pressure on the Government if the meeting of agriculture ministers on Tuesday failed to lift the ban.

There would be overwhelming expectations of action, and calling in the ambassadors would have widespread support.

Cabinet ministers reviewed possible action at a short meeting but Cabinet sources said there would be no "marching up the hill" again with renewed threats of counter-measures after the débacle last week.

Ministers appear to feel frustrated at their impotence, and the British action in the European Court is not seen as a quick remedy.

Paul Gentry, who runs Britain's second-largest prime beef cattle market at Newark, Nottinghamshire, said the culling scheme was "an absolute farce. We have no idea what is going on. I have no starting date for the scheme. I am bending over backwards to try and understand the logistics of this scheme."

"We have no idea of how we are going to be paid. We have no idea of how we are going to be able to pay the producer. It is just a monumental cock-up."

Peter Bowyer, a slaughterhouse operator from Hatherleigh, near Olkhampton, Devon, said: "This has been mismanaged. Nobody seems to know what is going on... We are ready to slaughter 400-500 cattle a day but cannot do anything until we know there is somewhere for the carcasses to go."

Howard furious at Bulger ruling

HEATHER MILLS
Home Affairs Correspondent

The Home Office may be forced to review the detention of up to 230 young killers after the High Court yesterday outlawed the 15-year minimum sentences imposed by Michael Howard on the schoolboys who killed toddler James Bulger.

The Home Secretary reacted furiously to his latest rebuff by the judiciary, threatening legislation "to protect the supreme power of Parliament to shape the law", and announcing an appeal against what he described as a "quite remarkable" judgment. Jamie Bulger's distraught mother, Denise, said she would devote her life to ensuring the

two boys stayed in detention. "I don't think his decision was unlawful - in fact I don't think they should get out at all," she said. "They did an adult crime and they should be treated like adults. If they don't have to serve the 15 years, as far as I am concerned they are getting off with it. It will just have been like a little holiday for them."

But children's and civil rights groups hailed the judgment - which outlawed the fixing of a "tariff" or minimum sentence for child offenders - as a return to the concept of "juvenile justice". Britain stands almost alone in treating child offenders as young as 10 as if they were adults.

In fact, the ruling will not



Michael Howard: Humiliated

necessarily mean that the two boys, Robert Thompson and Jon Venables, are released any earlier. It means only that their detention must be regularly reviewed. Read alongside a deci-

sion by European human rights judges earlier this year, that review must be by an independent "court-like" body - not the Home Secretary.

The ruling is seen as a further erosion of the Home Secretary's powers to fix sentences, and puts Mr Howard once again on collision course with the judiciary over crime and punishment.

The two boys were just 10 years old when they abducted two-year-old Jamie from a shopping precinct in 1993 and killed him on an isolated railway line in Walton, Liverpool. They were sentenced "to be detained at Her Majesty's Pleasure" - the indeterminate and compulsory sentence for juvenile killers. The trial judge, Mr

Justice Morland, recommended that they should serve a minimum eight-year "tariff" - the proportion of their sentence which reflects punishment and deterrence, before they can be considered for parole. Lord Taylor, the Lord Chief Justice recommended a 10-year tariff, but the Home Secretary, who makes the final decision, ruled that it should be 15 years.

But Lord Justice Pill, sitting with Mr Justice Newman, said yesterday that the Home Secretary had adopted "an unlawful practice" by treating the boys in the same way as adult murderers serving life sentences.

He said Mr Howard had every right to take an initial view

IN BRIEF

BSkyB claims £19m
Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation is to press ahead with a claim for £19m in damages from suppliers of "smart cards" to BSkyB. Page 3

Paving the way
Seven Trian Water has come up with a way for gardeners to conserve water this summer - pave over their lawns. Page 3

Today's weather
Scotland, Wales and western England will be dry and sunny. Other areas will be rainy and cold. Section Two, page 21



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news

Questionable performance by the Diva from Hell

This is a story of a row. Not a row as in fight or struggle - but a row of seats. To be precise the third row up, below the gangway on the government side of the Chamber. And it's a story of the men who sit there.

At 2.30 yesterday there were only a couple of bottoms parked on this row - the leanest of which belonged to the MP for Gravesend, Jacques Arnold. But why was he there at all? This was Northern Ireland questions and most sensible folk flee before the various factions and their mainland sympathisers get stuck in. My own theory is that he has an arrange-



DAVID AARONOVITCH

ment with David Mellor, whereby one remains in the House whenever the other is absent. As a consequence, Mr Arnold is never able to get away. Which is a shame for a man who lists his only recreation as "Family". A former junior minister,

Mr Arnold is too modest. He has at least two other hobbies - asking questions and shouting. Both of which allow him to employ his most notable attribute - his remarkable voice. This sounds like an adonoid buzz-saw with gears. In first it emits a whine which can scare slugs off lettuce at 200 yards. In higher gears his voice becomes inescapable and unbearable - like a snowdrifting aria by the Diva from Hell.

At 3.07pm, Mr Arnold was called to ask a question. On the order paper it was supposed to be about the flying over Irish police stations. North and South,

of Union flags and tricolours. But, putting the saw into second, Mr Arnold contrived this: "Has the minister received any request to fly the European flag over RUC stations?" This was greeted by one of those guffaws that passes for amusement in the House, and he sat down with a satisfied smile.

By now, with Prime Minister's questions fast approaching, the bench three was filling up. Two along was old Etonian Sir Archie Hamilton, former PPS to Mrs Thatcher in the Glory Days, and now consigned to the backbenches - his long and thickening form slumped languidly on the upholstery, alternately yawning and heckling Opposition women MPs.

On his right sat Richard Tracey, JP, MP (Surrey). Co-author of "Hickstead: the first twelve years", Mr Tracey's moment came in the mid-eighties when he was Minister of Sport.

And then it went again. He has a large face, but rather tiny features which perch almost arbitrarily somewhere near the middle. It reminds one of a map of Saskatchewan or Alberta, where huge expanses of Canadian prairie are punctuated by small conurbations, placed there for no obvious reason.

Like Jacques Arnold, Mr Tracey is a regular attendee; unlike him, he says little.

Three fifteen and Jacques was first on the order paper to ask the PM a question. As old hands in the press gallery reached for the ear-plugs, the buzz-saw invited Mr Major to agree that Labour local government was expensive and had value. Archie and Richard nodded. Mr Arnold sat down. Mr Major, prepared for this friendly question, rattled off a statistic or two. And there they remained through the rest of a surprisingly low-key session. Richard kept bobbing up and

trying to catch the Speaker's eye almost as though he had fallen asleep, but had forgotten to tell his legs. Archie and Jacques heckled the rather pathetic attempt by Labour's Bridget Prentice (Lewisham E) to fling the dead horse of a Heseltine leadership challenge, but their heads weren't in it.

Four o'clock and all three were still there, whence by now nearly all but they had fled. Three ex-ministers, seventeen years into the Conservative era, desultorily interrupting the shadow leader of the House, Ann Haylor from bench three. Waiting.

Advisers got £34m for pits sell-off

CHRIS BLACKHURST

Westminster Correspondent

The controversial sale of British Coal's pits to RJB Mining, the company controlled by entrepreneur Richard Budge, in 1994, cost the taxpayer £34m in advisers' fees, according to an official report published today.

Of that total, says the National Audit Office study, the bulk went to just three City firms. Rothschilds, the merchant bank, was paid £9.1m; Clifford Chance, the law firm, picked up £12.7m and Touche Ross, the accountants, received £4.3m. Dewe Rogerson, the City public relations agency, was paid £320,000.

The sale provoked an outcry for two main reasons. At the same time as the deal was being struck, Mr Budge was being investigated by another branch of government to see if he should be disqualified as a director over his involvement in another business venture.

Lord Wakeham, the minister responsible for appointing Rothschilds, also caused a furore who'd be joined the bank after leaving the Government. On the row over Mr Budge, the NAO found that Department of Trade and Industry officials talking to him about selling the pits had no idea he was also being looked at by the DTI's Insolvency Service. In the end, they decided not to apply for his disqualification but, says the NAO, "any such application could have had significant impact on RJB Mining's bid".

Since then, reports the watchdog, the DTI has tightened its procedures, issuing guidelines to officials on obtaining information about bidders in privatisations and the sources they can use. These guidelines should be applied in future sell-offs, the NAO says.

On Rothschilds, the NAO revealed the bank initially demanded a £4m "success fee" for handling the sale as well as charging an hourly rate. This demand, pointed out the watchdog, was only made after the bank had been chosen to handle the sale. The fee was subsequently negotiated down to £2.5m.

In future, says the report, departments should think about the overall size of the package before agreeing to pay a success fee. The factors to be taken into account in determining fees should be agreed in advance of the adviser's appointment.

Officials are also criticised for failing to set budgets for the advisers' total costs. In future, they should "make every effort to set overall budgets at the earliest opportunity where reasonably reliable estimates can be made".

One of the hidden benefits to the Government from the £963m sale, the report discloses, is that it agreed to act as a guarantor of the benefits to former miners from the British Coal pension fund - in return for a half share of any surplus from the fund. The NAO estimates this half share, on current forecasts, could yield £2bo for the Government.



Kind thought: Dunblane children choose some of the 5,000 Teddy bears sent to the city after the school shooting. Photograph: Crawford Brown

Bulger ruling follows judges' trend

A series of recent rulings have helped keep politicians out of determining sentences, writes Heather Mills

Yesterday's court defeat for Michael Howard is the latest advance by the judges in keeping politicians out of determining individual sentences.

A series of rulings by European and English judges eroding the role of the executive, means that the Home Secretary now retains only the right to decide if and when murderers serving mandatory life sentences should be freed.

Yesterday's High Court decision, coupled with a ruling by human rights judges in Strasbourg earlier this year, effectively removes any role for the Home Secretary in fixing penalties for the 230 children and young people detained indefi-

nitely "during her majesty's pleasure" for serious offences.

In February, a unanimous decision by the European Court of Human Rights swept away the powers of the Home Secretary to decide whether or not to release young murderers once a "tariff" or minimum term, set by the Home Secretary, had expired. They said their release should be decided by a "court-like body" which regularly reviewed their detention.

The two English judges' decision yesterday to declare "tariffs" illegal - saying that children should not be treated as adults - will leave the entire process in the hands of the independent tribunals, like the Parole Board.

In 1990 another European Court ruling abolished Mr Howard's powers to decide on the release dates for those serv-



Michael Howard: Faces cross-party opposition

ing discretionary life sentences - those life terms imposed for offences other than murder. Justice and human rights organisations say it is now only a matter of time before the Home Secretary's final say in mandating

tariffs is swept aside. There is a growing body of influential opinion - including that of the cross-party Home Affairs select committee - that it is wrong in principle for a politician to play a role in what should be a matter for the courts.

Last December, the Conservative-dominated Committee said Michael Howard might be in a better position to respond to "public will" in high profile cases, but "public opinion is not the surest guide in making such a decision".

These words should ring alarm bells with Mr Howard before he proceeds with his threat yesterday to change the law relating to child killers, if he fails - as is likely - in his appeals against yesterday's decision. MPs will be even more emphatic in their opposition to ex-

ecutive involvement when it comes to children's rights and justice. Mr Howard would face some cross-party opposition in the Commons - and outright hostility in the Lords, which is in favour of abolishing the mandatory life sentence for murder all together.

As it is, the UK is out of step with European the way that it deals with child offenders. Most countries have set the age of criminality as low as 10. While yesterday's ruling was seen by lawyers and children's groups as a step towards a return to the concept of "juvenile justice", they argue that the government should go further.

Justice in its recent report on child killers, suggests raising the age of criminality to 14, claims that a public trial is inappropriate for those under 14, and recommends that an independent court-like body responsible for deciding their release dates should review their detention every year.

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Anger grows over Bulger murder sentences

FROM PAGE 1

on the length of detention needed to satisfy retribution and deterrence, but he had to ensure that was kept under constant review as their personalities matured and developed.

"What I cannot accept is that in the case of an offender aged 10 or 11, he can fix a tariff of 15 years as if the offend-

er were an adult," he said.

The judge said he recognised the Home Secretary's responsibility - along with that of the judges - to maintain public confidence in the system of criminal justice. "Public revulsion at this offence is entirely understandable and reassuring. The public can be expected to express overwhelming

their support for Mr and Mrs Bulger in the tragic loss they have suffered and to support measures to prevent such a crime happening again."

However, he said the Mr Howard had to give "regular and reasoned" consideration to what is achieved for the public good - even if he felt he was "sailing upon a stormy sea"

Anthony Bevin to rejoin 'Independent'



Anthony Bevin

Anthony Bevin, the award-winning political journalist, is to leave the *Observer* to rejoin the *Independent* as political editor.

Mr Bevin ran the *Independent's* original political team when the paper was launched in 1986. Before that he was chief political correspondent of the *Times*.

Donald Macintyre, our present political editor, has been appointed chief political commentator. Mr Macintyre was labour editor of the *Independent*



Donald Macintyre

and at launch and then political editor and columnist for the *Independent* on Sunday. He will be writing a twice-weekly column in his new role.

Andrew Marr, the editor designate, will also continue to write regularly in the newspaper. Last night, Mr Marr said: "The return of Tony Bevin and the elevation of Don Macintyre give us the finest political team, bar none, as we prepare for the most important general election campaign for many years."

Robbers who broke the bank - literally

Galway gardai are anxious to talk to a modern-day Butch Cassidy or a budding Smith and Jones after an ill-fated early morning heist yesterday that literally broke the bank.

The robbers arrived at 4am at the Ulster Bank on Galway's Tuam Road without PIN numbers but equipped with a mechanical loader, and seeking a large and urgent withdrawal above the £100,000 (£210) limit permitted by its cash dispensing machine.

Their plan was to extract the cash dispenser in its entirety from the front wall. But pressing all the wrong buttons, the hapless thieves succeeded in virtually demolishing the bank building. The objects of their desire meanwhile, the cash machine and the adjacent night safe, refused to budge.

Doubtless distraught that crime was clearly not about to pay, the thieves had to admit defeat. Abandoning their stolen Volvo CAT dumper at the scene, they made off in a waiting car.

Gardai said the mechanical loader used by the gang had done "serious structural damage" to the bank, which might have to be demolished and rebuilt. Meanwhile NCR, manufacturers of the Fort-Knox standard cash dispenser were yesterday giving themselves a pat on the back.

The popularity of ICB-type diggers in the armed robbery business has grown following the widespread deployment of security guards in Irish bank branches. This was a response to an epidemic of attacks on banks and post offices in the early Eighties, fuelled by both increasing availability of guns to criminals and paramilitary groups' need for ready cash.

Several years ago Dublin criminals achieved a spectacular success when they attacked a security van carrying a large cash consignment on the Navan Road on the city's north-side. Since then there have been other attempts to make off with cash dispensers in both Ireland and mainland Britain.

IN BRIDE

GP's daughter killed with boyfriend

A doctor's daughter and her boyfriend were found brutally murdered in a country bungalow yesterday. Fiona Ovis, 22, and William Crumpton, 18, had been killed in a knife attack.

Fiona and William were found at the £30,000 home at Landindale Wells in Mid Wales, which was owned by her late grandparents. The dead woman's recently retired father, Dr Simeon Ovis, had been trying to sell the bungalow, but it is believed his daughter had a key. A 26-year-old man was last night being questioned by Dyfed-Powys police.

Lifting the lid

Researchers began lifting the lid on Britain's rubbish bins yesterday as part of a project to find out how much waste packaging is thrown out. Trash from more than 2,000 homes will be analysed and the results used to help formulate recovery and recycling programmes. The Government is urging packaging manufacturers to increase the recovery of the waste.

Library thief jailed

A landscape gardener who toured the county stealing rare plants from library books has been jailed for four years at Southwark Crown Court in London. Joseph Bellwood, 43, of Swillington, Leeds, admitted stealing plants worth £120,000 and selling them for £17,000.

Star turns

ITV is to use stars from some of its most successful programmes to promote less popular shows. Bill Tarmey and Liz Dawn, who play Jack and Vera Duckworth in *Coronation Street* will help advertise Melvyn Bragg's arts programme, *The South Bank Show*.

Life sentence

A jealous man who murdered his ex-wife when he discovered she was having an affair with his long lost son was jailed for life at Winchester Crown Court. Charles Hansco, 48, of East Dulwich, London, stabbed Julie Dalton with a 10-inch knife in front of Neil Mason, 23, his son from a previous marriage. He had denied murder.

Editors warned

Newspaper editors and photographers were given a warning last night after the recent publication of pictures showing Prince William at Eton. Lord Wakeham, the chairman of the Press Complaints Commission, said: "Just recently there have been one or two instances where reporting - in terms of the publication of photographs taken of William during his time at school - has begun to stray into grey areas around the dividing line between the freedom of the press and its duty to respect the privacy of a child."

Soldier ambushed

Six men were being questioned by police last night after an army despatch rider was ambushed as he travelled on a minor road near Heddon-on-the-Wall, Northumberland. The soldier, from 8 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps, was left stranded when the raiders made off with his 350cc Harley Davidson and unloaded automatic rifle.

£350,000 rail sale

A toy train set broke all records last night when it sold for almost £350,000 in an auction at Christie's in London. Collectors from around the world bid for more than 500 items, including locomotives, freight wagons and stations, sold by the set's anonymous Swiss owner.

Family reunion

Hit Seventies family band, The Jackson Five, are set to re-form to record and tour, it was claimed yesterday. Elder brother Tito Jackson said the plans included the American group's most famous member, Michael.

DJ smuggled drugs

A disc jockey was jailed for two years yesterday for smuggling £18,000 worth of drugs into Britain. Stephen Smith, 30, of the London-based radio station Kiss FM, had denied smuggling 5.16kg of herbal cannabis through Dover, Kent, in October 1994 but was convicted at Canterbury Crown Court.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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Spot the difference: Doctors given a twin-track solution

JAMES CUSICK

They came two by two. And they just kept coming. So many were there that passers-by on nearby Westminster Bridge might have been suspected the sudden onset of double vision.

In fact, although no eye tests were necessary, the presence of 500 sets of female twins enjoying a party in their honour at St Thomas's Hospital yesterday might ultimately help the visually impaired, as well as those suffering from a range of other medical conditions.

The hospital's Twin Research Unit, set up in 1992, has attempted to explain the role of genetics in many common diseases of ageing – notably osteoporosis and osteoarthritis – by examining the DNA of people born from the same egg.

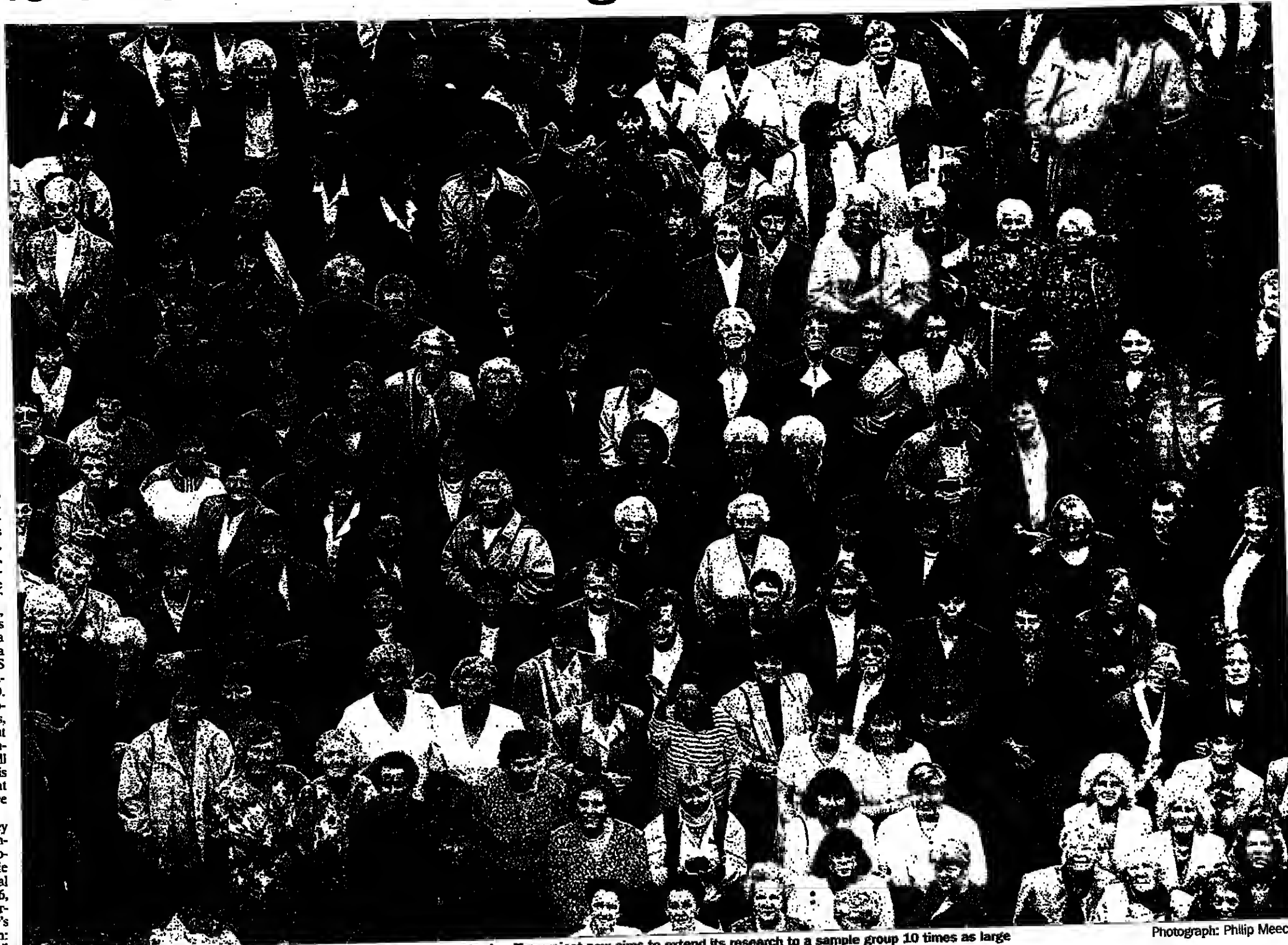
Wise to the commercial possibilities of the project, which could help thousands, a private firm, Gemini Research, has already backed it to the tune of £1m. So successful have been the initial results that 5,000 pairs of twins are to be recruited for the next phase.

Gemini, and Dr Tim Spector, who leads the research, hope the data collected will enable doctors to predict which patients are most susceptible to diabetes, asthma, cardiovascular disease, back pain, skin ailments, deafness and obesity, as well as bone disorders. A "pill in a bottle" cure may be many years away, says Dr Spector, but his findings have already helped establish a link between osteoporosis – a disease which costs the NHS £750m a year – and an individual's ability to absorb vitamin D.

While this aspect of the project has already paid dividends, Dr Spector admits no new light has been shed on the phenomenon of twinning itself. "We still don't know precisely why this occurs. But we do know that twins are more likely to give birth to twins."

When asked whether they had learnt anything about themselves through the testing programme, new recruit Susie Gibbon and her non-identical twin, Hillary Clewer (both 26, identically dressed and apparently able to read each other's thoughts) replied in unison: "No – but we had a lot of fun."

Leading article, page 16



Double-take: The 500 sets of twins at St Thomas's Hospital, London, yesterday. The project now aims to extend its research to a sample group 10 times as large

Photograph: Philip Meech

News Corp to sue over 'inflated' smart card costs

PETER RODGERS
Business Editor

Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation said yesterday it is to press ahead with a claim for £19m in damages from suppliers of "smart cards" to BSkyB. It claims it was outsmarted for some years by the suppliers of its cards, who used a highly secure encryption technology invented in Israel.

The electronic smart cards are at the heart of the business of BSkyB and other television operations in which News Corp is involved. They are the key that unlocks satellite TV programmes for subscribers and only viewers with cards can gain access.

The suppliers are alleged to have artificially inflated the price of the cards charged to News Corp, and split some of

the excess profits between a number of individuals.

The defendants in the action, in which News Corp alleges a conspiracy, include former executives of subsidiaries of News Corp.

Among these subsidiaries is News Datacom, the group's conduit for the supply of smart cards to its satellite television associates.

Arthur Siskind, a New York-based director of News Corp and the company's general counsel, said the action in London involved individuals and companies no longer connected with the group. "We believe the problem has been remedied. What we are seeking is redress for the damages that have been done."

He said the main problem News Corp faced, its vulnerability to a single supplier of



Rupert Murdoch: Claiming damages of £19m

smart cards, had been overcome, there were now several sources and prices had fallen.

Jan Rosenblatt, a London solicitor representing Bharat Ku-

mar Marya, a California businessman, and several of his associated companies which are defendants in the case, said: "There are questionable motives for this litigation and we are defending it vigorously. We deny any conspiracy. The case is not expected to come to court until next year."

Mr Rosenblatt rejected an allegation in News Corp's writ that PMI, an offshore company that supplied smart cards to News Corp, was 40 per cent owned by the Marya companies.

The writs allege that PMI was a conduit for some of the excess profits earned in selling the smart cards at inflated prices to News Corp. The alleged conspiracy also included obstruction of the media company's attempts to diversify its supply of smart cards.

News Corp also alleged that

difficulties in the management of News Datacom between 1987 and 1992 were caused by the "unauthorised acts of certain of the defendants who are the subject of the lawsuit. News Corporation reaffirms its complete faith in the current management of News Datacom."

A spokesman for News Corp rejected related allegations in the *Financial Times* that the company had indulged in "questionable tax planning" to minimise tax bills in the UK and Israel, where the smart card technology came from.

He said the company had "fully complied with its obligations under all tax laws to which it is subject. In particular, the company's Israeli subsidiary, since its inception, has had accumulated losses and, as a consequence, has not incurred income tax liability in Israel."

Grass isn't always greener for water firm

PETER VICTOR

Severn Trent Water has come up with a foolproof way for keen gardeners to conserve water this summer – pave over their lawns with concrete slabs.

The water company, which imposed a six-month hosepipe ban on its 3 million customers and made a profit of £238m last year, is also advising gardeners that they could make their lawns smaller by increasing the size of flower borders or leave grass clippings on the ground to keep lawns looking greener.

Other ideas in a leaflet sent to households across the Midlands include leaving grass growing longer and saving rain water.

Labour MP Robin Corbett, whose Birmingham Erdington constituency is covered by Severn Trent, described the ideas as "crackpot". He said: "I have never heard of anything so ludicrous. They would do better to conserve water by stopping the water leakages they are responsible for. They are ones responsible for the huge loss of water – not the customers."

The leaflet tells gardeners: "Tradition dictates that we have a lawn – but do we really need one? Why not increase the size of your borders or replace lawned areas with paving stones or gravel?"

A spokesman for Severn Trent Water said the leaflet had been written to help gardeners prepare for a summer drought. He said replacing lawns with paving was just one solution to drought problems and other advice included what plants to use and to collect rain-water in a bucket.

"We wanted to make gardeners aware of how they can put their gardens together to withstand the sort of droughts we saw last year. We do give other advice such as which plants to use, how to collect water in a bucket and so on."

"Basically we are trying to help gardeners who are cheesed off with seeing their lawn go brown and dead in the heat. We are just giving them ideas as to how they could organise their gardens differently – but only if they want to."

The spokesman said the

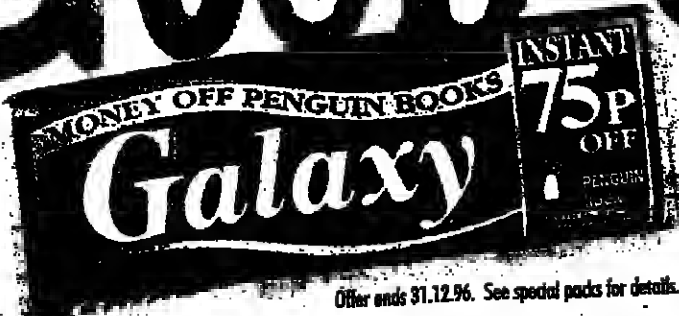
leaflet, which was launched last week, had the backing of gardener and broadcaster Anne Swinbank, who appears on Radio 4's *Gardeners' Question Time*. "It is our way of building bridges to gardeners who co-operated very well with us last summer when we had the drought."

A spokesman for the water industry regulator, Ofwat, said it welcomed customers being responsible about water conservation but did not want gardeners to think they had to pave over their lawns.

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4
newsOfsted chief in
fresh row overFRAN ABRAMS
Education Correspondent

New accusations of political bias were levelled at the Chief Inspector of Schools last night after the leaking of a critical report on reading standards in three London boroughs.

The report, due to be published by the school inspection body, Ofsted, next week, is believed to say that almost eight out of 10 seven-year-olds in Islington, Tower Hamlets and Southwark have reading ages below their actual age. It is expected to add that head teachers show "insufficient leadership" in one in three schools and that teachers are held back by a lack of knowledge and training.

The report is also likely to say that time devoted to reading is not always used to good effect.

Last night the three author-

ities said the final version of the report had been altered and that an earlier draft had more praise for the work of teachers. A paragraph emphasising the exceptional demands made on teachers by pupils from deprived backgrounds and with special needs appeared to have been deleted, they said. One sentence which had said that two-thirds of lessons were satisfactory had been altered to say that one-third was unsatisfactory.

Mr Woodhead has repeatedly been accused of right-wing political bias. Last year he wrote a pamphlet for a right-wing think tank, Politeia, which questioned the future role of local education authorities. He also suggested on a television programme that 15,000 inadequate teachers should be sacked, prompting protests that he had failed to mention the 45,000 who were outstandingly good.

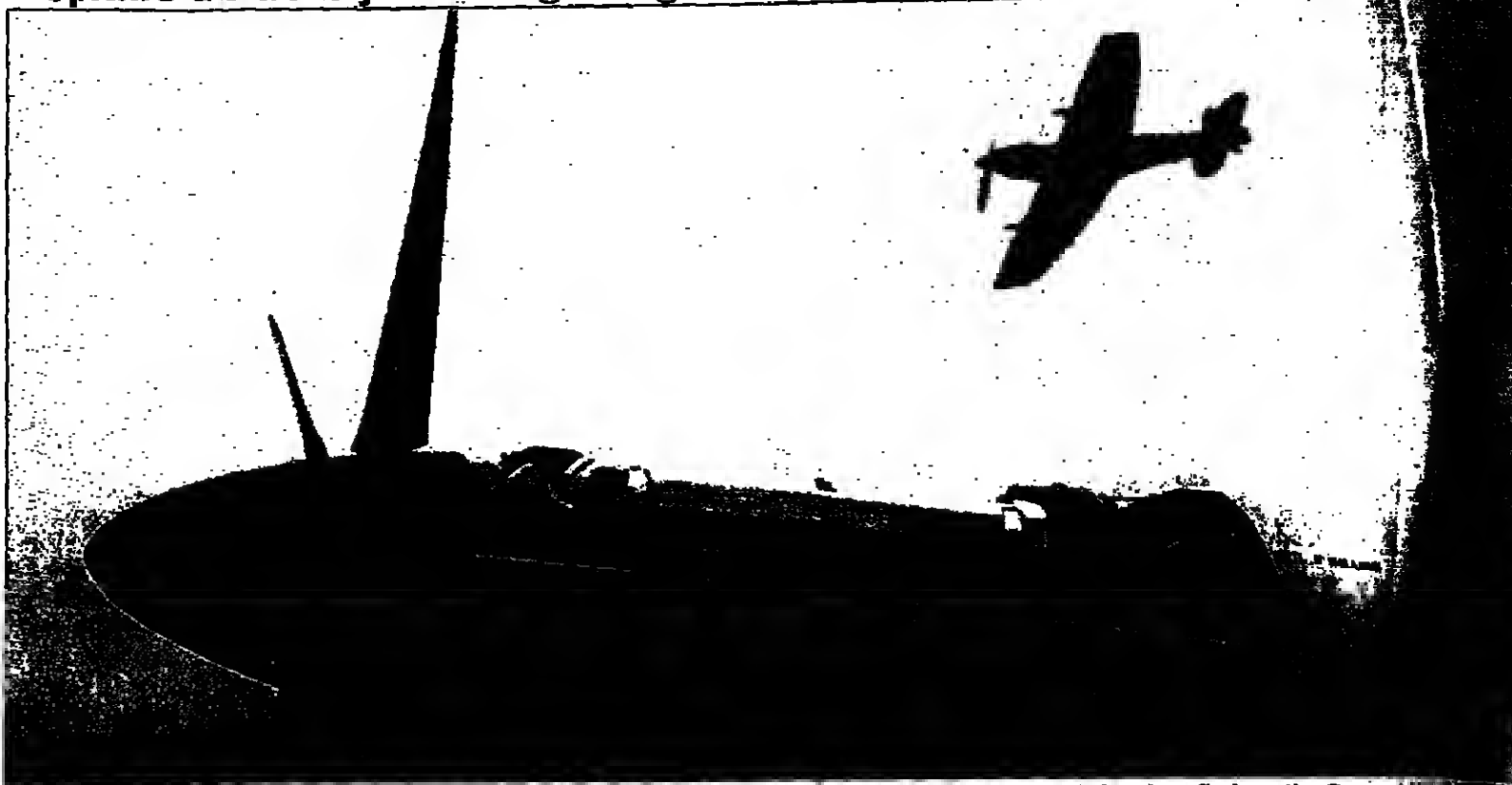
The plan to inspect reading in the three boroughs was announced by John Major last September. The three boroughs selected agreed to allow Ofsted inspectors into 45 primary schools on the understanding that it was meant to draw attention to good practice. Last night they claimed it had been hijacked for political ends.

Phil Kelly, chairman of education in Islington, said: "The report has been redrafted to emphasise problems in teachers' skills and teachers' leadership. The slanting of the report in this way is clearly intended to pander to the prejudices of Mr Woodhead's political masters."

Anne Worsley, chairman of education in Southwark, added: "The draft of the report has clearly been altered at the instigation of the chief inspector."

A spokesman for Ofsted defended the report but refused to confirm the details.

Spitfire diamond jubilee: Fighters gather to remember the few who saved a



Flight of fancy: A Spitfire flies over Duxford airfield in Cambridgeshire where the biggest gathering of the aircraft since the Second World War is due to take place on Bank Holiday Monday. Twenty five of the fighters will take part in the Spitfire Diamond Jubilee Air Show.

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Cancer patients
tell of callousness

Cancer patients speak out frankly today about their treatment in a unique report documenting their experiences. Many say they are not given enough information and want more honesty from the doctors dealing with them.

The study involves people from four regions of England, all of whom say they had not received enough information, and some information was deliberately withheld. The doctor was considered the best person to provide information.

Patients wanted to know about diagnostic procedures to avoid fear and upset from lack of understanding of what to expect. They also expected information on procedures and potential success rates, side-effects, post-treatment symptoms and all aspects of living with cancer. Many patients reported that the attitude of health professionals prevented them developing an effective working relationship.

Cancer patients wanted to be treated with respect for their personal dignity and as people with individual needs - not as a tumour to be processed. Patients came up with repeated examples of thoughtlessness or callous behaviour at the point of diagnosis. A woman recalled: "He said 'It's not looking good, we will have to have your right breast removed tomorrow', and that was it: he walked out and that was the only thing I knew. It took 20 seconds and he never mentioned cancer."

Meteorites prompt a
rash of UFO 'sightings'

A huge meteorite shower in the skies over Scotland and Northern Ireland sparked hundreds of calls from worried onlookers reporting UFOs, weather forecasters said yesterday.

Police and coastguards between Stornoway and Glasgow were inundated with calls when the spectacular light display started shortly after 10pm on Wednesday night.

Meteorologists were yesterday investigating the reports, but could not say if more meteorites would be visible. Witnesses spoke of seeing bright lights

darting west to east, leaving vapour trails behind them.

A Glasgow Weather Centre spokesman said: "We certainly took a lot of calls... because when people see an unusual light in the sky they immediately think of UFOs."

"Apparently it was a very large and very bright shower which was visible over much of the country. It would have been quite spectacular."

Reports of the shower came from the Western Isles, Strathclyde and over to Ulster until early yesterday.

Animal
WRONGS

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acceptance and surgery.
"It was like coming home," she said. "When I realised that

Court of Justice found that the behaviour of the school directors breached the 1976 Euro-

that the Government would have to amend legislation

such as the 1976 Euro- birth certificates and passports.

missioning IRA weapons

سكنا من الحزن

Bankside project: Scheme to transform derelict site into centre for arts takes major leap



Picture palace: Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate, checks out Bankside, the gallery's new £12m acquisition

Photograph: Philip Meech

Joy for Tate as £12m gift buys power house

Bankside power station, which is being turned into a major cultural centre, has been bought for the Tate Gallery for £12m by the regenerative agency English Partnerships, it was announced yesterday.

The Tate has also gained planning permission from Southwark council for its plans to transform the striking building on the south bank of the river Thames to Loodoo, Tate director Nicholas Serota said.

English Partnerships' money goes to Magnox plc, the publicly owned section of the nuclear industry which owns the site and is decommissioning it.

Mr Serota said: "This investment will help turn a derelict site at the heart of the capital into a major cultural, social and economic asset for Southwark and the nation."

The project was also recently awarded a £50m grant by the National Lottery-backed Millennium Commission, and it is hoped to open it in 2000.

The Tate Gallery must find the rest of the estimated total of £106m cost from other sources. Mr Serota said remaining money had to be found by February next year.

But he added: "I can assure you that we have a large number of commitments and we are making really excellent progress in getting that money and are well on our way to reaching that £56m."

Yesterday's £12m regeneration grant was the first part of that, he said. English Partnerships chief executive, David Taylor, said the grant was unconditional.

"This investment will help turn this redundant and derelict building into a major national landmark," he said.

"It will create up to 1,000 new jobs for people in Southwark and will promote the broader regeneration of the area."

It was the first time, perhaps in Europe, that a former power station had been reclaimed for new use, he said.

The Department of Environment had spent millions decommissioning old power stations, as had the Department of Energy and CEBG after it, he said.

Magnox Electric chairman Mark Baker said: "Not only will Bankside get continued life as a valuable public asset, the taxpayer has benefited too."

Nadir gives conditions for his return

JOHN WILLCOCK

Asil Nadir, the former Polly Peck boss who fled to Northern Cyprus while facing fraud charges, yesterday said he would return to face trial only if a new government were elected and key regulatory figures replaced.

In a bizarre press conference with British journalists via a radio link from Northern Cyprus, he accused the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), Scotland Yard, the Inland Revenue and the Government of conspiring to frame him. He would only receive a fair trial if a new government was elected which had "clean hands", he said.

The conference, in London, was held to launch a book, *Who Killed Polly Peck?*, by Nadir's former business associate Elizabeth Forsyth. The 59-year-old grandmother was unable to attend as she has been jailed for five years for handling £400,000 stolen by Nadir, who fled in May 1993 while being investigated by the SFO on 13 charges of fraud and false accounting amounting to £34m. They concerned the collapse of his fruit-packing-to-electronics group, Polly Peck, a 1980s star of the stock market which crashed in 1990.

Yesterday Nadir reiterated that the authorities and "people with money" were out to get him, not least because the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is not recognised by Britain. When asked if he would really return to face trial, he replied: "I certainly will. No regulatory authority and no government is in power for ever. Thank God there is a certain amount of democratic election and we know the elections are approaching. I hope the British public will give their view of what they think of the British government."

He defended his decision not to return to help Forsyth's defence, saying the judge refused to allow a video link for him to testify and be cross-examined. Forsyth's fate was a "great disappointment from a British justice point of view".

Nadir said he had been unjustly persecuted by the SFO, Scotland Yard and the Department of Public Prosecutions.

Nadir cultivated political contacts while in Britain. He famously sent a wristwatch to the former Tory minister Michael Mates with the inscription "Don't let the bastards grind you down" on the back.

The self-made man from Nicosia also contributed thousands of pounds to the Conservatives. Asked whether he regretted these donations, he said: "I never regret anything in my life. I regret having trusted the authorities."

Polly Peck was in the top 100 companies on the UK stock market in 1990 and was worth £2bn. It hit trouble that year when Nadir tried to buy the company back into private ownership without properly consulting his City advisers. Following a Stock Exchange inquiry the company went into administration. Shareholders lost everything.

Yesterday Nadir sent them a message, saying he would pay them back when he had proved his innocence.

"My battle is two-pronged - one is to clear my name, and two is to ensure that at the appropriate time Polly Peck shareholders, by being active, get compensated in two ways."

"Firstly, with what I am endeavouring to build for them, which I will share with them at the end of the day, and two is by them fighting to seek the truth, because the truth is only their only weapon in this unjust affair."

Postal workers set to strike

BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

Britain faces the prospect of the first national postal strike for a decade after union leaders yesterday ordered a ballot on industrial action in a dispute over hours and working practices.

Leaders of the Communication Workers' Union yesterday declared that stoppages were "almost inevitable" after 11 months of negotiations over a "new way of working" broke down on Wednesday night.

While management registered its intention to engage in an intensive communications campaign with employees over the next few weeks, some have privately conceded that a vote in favour of action looks likely.

The union will urge its 140,000 members to back nationwide stoppages in support of an immediate reduction in the working week from six

days to five and a cut in hours.

At the heart of the dispute is suspicion among activists that a plan to introduce team-working would bypass the union's own communications structure. There is also deep distrust about the motives of management among ordinary union members, many of whom have taken part in a series of wildcat stoppages over the last 18 months.

Despite repeated denials from management, employees fear there is a "hidden agenda" to drop the second postal delivery thus cutting back on the number of full-time jobs.

The postal executive of the CWU yesterday agreed unanimously to begin balloting their members on 13 May, with the result expected on 2 June at the annual conference in Blackpool.

In return for new working practices, management has offered a five-day week and a job guarantee by 2000. A new pay

system would increase basic pay from £187 to £211, says management. However, staff would retain only three of their 30 extra allowances. Average earnings would increase by up to £30 to £300 a week although managers will not quantify how much would be "new money".

Alan Johnson, joint general secretary of the CWU, seized on an admission by Brian Thomson, Royal Mail personnel director, that while 70 per cent of employees would earn more, around 30 per cent, who relied on overtime and allowances to make up their pay, would lose out. That was not the basis for a settlement, Mr Johnson said.

Mr Thomson said the service was "on the edge of a precipice". The union was expecting to get a cut in working time without making concessions. But he said negotiations were not complete and Royal Mail was prepared to put extra money on the table.

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politics

Major warns IRA ceasefire must come soon

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

John Major yesterday warned the IRA that the ceasefire would have to be "credible, clear cut and certain" for Sinn Féin to be admitted to the all-party talks on 10 June.

The Prime Minister appealed to the IRA to resume the ceasefire with an assurance that the all-party talks on 10 June will be "serious". But his remarks in the Commons underlined growing British fears that the IRA could

leave it until the 11th hour before calling a tactical cessation of violence to allow Sinn Féin to gain admission to the negotiations.

Behind the Prime Minister's remarks lies the clear threat that ministers could still seek to block Sinn Féin's admittance if the ceasefire is seen as an empty gesture. Mr Major said there was "no reason whatsoever for the IRA not to stay their violence immediately".

He said: "The all party negotiations will be serious and

will start on 10 June... they will gain nothing by waiting."

In spite of the Prime Minister's appeal, the British and Irish Governments are at loggerheads over the plan put forward by Dick Spring, the Irish Foreign Minister, for the decommissioning of IRA weapons to be hived off into separate talks on 10 June.

It was strongly attacked by David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist Leader, after it was raised in the *Independent* by Mr Spring. "I think Mr Spring is

making a mistake... It's quite unnecessary. We have already been there. We set up an international commission by Senator George Mitchell to deal with decommissioning. My impression is the Irish Government are dragging their heels."

Mr Mowlem, Labour's spokeswoman on Northern Ireland, said Mr Spring's proposals were "entirely in keeping with the (Mitchell) report and provide the most sensible way to proceed".

The Government has refused

to say anything officially about the Spring proposals to avoid causing a crisis before the all-party talks, but they now hang in the balance, and Mr Mowlem's remarks put pressure on the Government to intensify its efforts to reach a compromise which will bring the Unionists and Sinn Féin to the negotiating table.

Downing Street refused to commit the Prime Minister to opening the talks, in spite of the request to do so by Dublin. Ministers have refused to endorse

the Spring plans because the Ulster Unionists oppose them. London has told Dublin that Mr Spring's ideas will not work if they are not accepted by the Unionists.

Mr Trimble said the Ulster Unionists had shifted from their demand for decommissioning before the all-party talks with Sinn Féin to accept parallel decommissioning, as recommended by the Mitchell report. But the Ulster Unionists objected to the Dublin proposals because it appears they would

involve a separate set of talks. Irish sources said that was not the intention and British ministers were last night seeking a compromise to allow the talks to make progress on 10 June, if Sinn Féin is admitted.

"They are all engaged in electioneering at the moment. The remarkable thing is the Unionists have accepted the Mitchell report, which includes parallel decommissioning. We are looking for a way through the problem," said one ministerial source.

Fergus Finlay, a political adviser to Mr Spring, was accused by Roy Beggs, the Ulster Unionist MP, of saying the talks would be a waste of time without Sinn Féin. He called on Mr Major for an assurance that the talks would still have influence if Sinn Féin did not attend.

The Prime Minister assured MPs that the talks would go ahead, if Sinn Féin did not attend. "If there is no credible, clear cut and certain ceasefire, Sinn Féin can in no sense claim to be a democratic party."

Mayor sees red over 'scruffy' council

RICHARD SMITH

Labour councillor Adrian Gregsoo has caused a party rift by turning up for a meeting in a Manchester United football shirt.

Now the 33-year-old councillor could receive a red card from his own party if he makes another appearance in a United shirt at a Labour-run Worcester City Council meeting.

Mr Gregsoo went to a meeting on Tuesday, kitted out in a United shirt, a pair of rugby shorts, tennis socks and training shoes, to protest against a dressing down directed at scruffy councillors by Labour's mayor-elect Les Thomas.

Mr Thomas, 61, who becomes mayor next month, told councillors that some of them looked like they were heading for the heath and needed to smarten up. He has said he intends to seek legal advice to banish members from the chamber unless they wear a jacket and tie.

"I'm quite sure last night was a protest against my remarks and I'm very disappointed," said Mr Thomas, who was defending his Nunnery ward seat in yesterday's local elections.

"I think it's bad form. It just showed a lack of dignity for the council and respect for the position. He did smile at me and I smiled at him but I was very disappointed... Everybody treated it as a joke when I brought this up, but the point I was making was that people in the city look up to us and expect us to dress to a standard. We are, after all, the city fathers."

"Back in the 60's the High Sheriff of Worcester was digging his garden in an old pair of grey flannels and a shirt when a member of the public asked him if he thought it becoming to dig the garden in such old clothes."

"If that person had been in the chamber last night he would have blown a fuse."

"When I take office I intend to ask the city solicitor if I can tell councillors who I think are improperly dressed that they should retire from the meeting until they put on a jacket and tie."

Mr Gregsoo, the Hereford and Worcester branch secretary for the public sector union Unison, said he would continue to dress casually when it suited him. "It's not important what you wear or what you look like," he insisted.

"People judge you by what you say and do."

"There are a couple of us who have been known to turn up for meetings in the summer wearing shorts."

"I normally wear whatever I've got on during the day. If it's appropriate to wear a jacket and tie for work then I will but if it's out then I don't."

"I knew Les wouldn't appreciate the shirt but at least United play in red..."

"If we had our beateo Nottingham Forest I don't think I would have been seen wearing it in public but now United are quite definitely going to win the championship."



Vote for coffee: Polling was slightly less than brisk at this station in Hungerford, John Major's constituency, yesterday as the local elections began. Photograph: Brian Harris

Hague urges councils to publish child abuse report

ROGER DOBSON

Councils working on publishing the confidential and controversial report into widespread child abuse at Children's homes in North Wales have been told by the Secretary of State for Wales, William Hague, that they must act quickly and fix a publication date.

The move by Mr Hague follows growing concern that the report is at risk of becoming bogged down in bureaucracy because of the need for at least four councils to agree on what action to take.

The report's authors are willing to take another look at their 300-page document to try and remove any hindrance to its publication. John Jillings, the former director of social services in Derbyshire, who chaired the inquiry panel, said yesterday: "I

have written to the council saying I would be happy to try and assist with the publication of the report and invited them to contact me. Today I have had some preliminary contact, and I can say no more than that."

Cwyd County Council, which commissioned the report and who decided in March not to publish it, despite two years of work by three leading specialists in child care, ceased to exist after local government reorganisation on 1 April.

Four of the successor authorities have now been told by Mr Hague to find a way of publishing the report which itself calls for a judicial inquiry into the events at children's homes in Wales which led to Britain's biggest child abuse police inquiry. In his letter yesterday, he said: "I think it is essential that every effort is made by the lo-

cal authorities to produce a version of this report that can be published, and soon."

"I look forward to hearing the outcome of your initial deliberations and in particular, the details of your timetable for rendering the report publishable."

The report reveals in detail what went on in homes over a 21 year period, looks at the types of abuse that occurred, who carried it out, and criticises the role of the Welsh Office and other agencies.

The report's summing up says: "It is clear that in a significant number of cases the lives of young people who have been through the care system in Cwyd have been severely disrupted and disturbed. At least 12 young people are dead."

"These issues are of fundamental importance and we regard it as imperative that they

are addressed in the full view of public scrutiny. We consider that a public judicial inquiry... should be initiated."

One of the reasons for not publishing it was the belief that it might contain libels against individuals. Welsh Office lawyers have been closely examining it over the past two weeks.

Labour's spokesman on health in Wales, Rhodri Morgan, said: "The report must be published but we also must not lose sight of its main recommendation, that there is an urgent need for a full judicial inquiry."

Mr Hague has not ruled out a judicial inquiry which, it is estimated, could cost up to £5m. Supporters of the call for such an inquiry say that it is the only way of establishing what really went on in North Wales children's homes over two decades.



Hague: Exerting pressure

Labour urged to reform strike law

Legislation to allow sympathy action by strikers was called for last night by Kevin McNamara, a former Labour front-bench spokesman, in a clear message to the party leadership to reverse Tory employment laws, writes Colin Brown.

Secondary action was outlawed when James Prior was Barroos Thatcher's employment secretary, but Mr McNamara, a former Northern Ireland spokesman, said it should be included in a Bill of workers' rights.

"Secondary action is something which must be recognised," Mr McNamara told a meeting in Belfast. He said workers should be able to go on strike and engage in other industrial action and not be dismissed by their employer.

"A legal right to the suspension of a contract of employment during a lawful strike should be a defence in law. With that also must go the right to engage in secondary action, particularly where the employer moves work to another site."

Labour is currently debating reforming trade union laws, but restoring legal rights to secondary action, where there is no connection with the dispute, is ruled out by Labour leaders.

Ministers told to keep tabs on edicts from Europe

COLIN BROWN

Ministers are to be held responsible for checking all European legislation to cut down taxes on business and charities, under deregulation measures announced yesterday by the Cabinet Office.

The guidelines warn ministers that they should carry out their checks "at the earliest possible stage". And it points out: "It is much easier to influence a proposal when it is being discussed within the Commission than when it is being discussed within the Council of Ministers."

Ministers must personally certify that they have read both the risk assessment and a compliance cost assessment in order to satisfy themselves that the benefits of the regulation justify its costs.

The risk and cost assessment will also apply to all government

legislation in the initiative of deregulation masterminded by Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister.

The guidance to all Whitehall departments says new laws must be necessary, aimed at the right target, and in proportion to the problem.

It also applies to all documents for the Cabinet or Cabinet committees, and all minutes to No 10 Downing Street for collective discussion that deal with proposals for business, charities and voluntary bodies, and recommendations by public inquiries.

Hint of autumn election has rumour mill buzzing

A rumour that the Government is clearing the parliamentary decks in order to go for an autumn general election was given the added stamp of a Commons airing yesterday.

With MPs either taking over the Tory leadership honours, the beef car or doing a bit of council electioneering, Ann Taylor, shadow leader of the Commons, tried a different tack.

"Rumours are circulating that the Government intends to clear the decks of government business by July so as to minimise the need for a spill-over



session in October and thereby prepare the ground for an autumn election," she said during questions of forthcoming Commons business.

Tony Newton, Leader of the

Commons, agreed that there did indeed seem to be a lot of rumours about, including a suggestion the House might rise for its summer "very early" in July.

Normally MPs begin their holidays in the last week of July and return in mid-October for a couple of weeks finishing off legislation before the new parliamentary begins in early November.

But Mr Newton said he did not know who was putting the rumours around. "I only know it is not me and I do not want to give any credence to them."

While Tories readied themselves for a passing in the local elections, John Major hearted his backbenchers with an acid remark about "smug" Labour politicians taking too much for granted.

Bridge Prentice, Labour MP for Lewisham East, recalled that three times on Tuesday, the Prime Minister failed to give a direct answer to questions about a deal with his deputy, Michael Heseltine. "Have you ever discussed with Mr Heseltine the possibility that you would stand aside and allow

your deputy to take over if by tomorrow Conservative Party fortunes have not improved?" Mrs Prentice asked.

Mr Major hit back: "The last Labour politician who was that smug about elections is now earning his living elsewhere in Europe." The reminder of the misplaced hubris of Neil Kinnock in the 1992 election campaign hit home on the Opposition benches. The former party leader is now a European Commissioner.

The Prime Minister used his polling day Question Time for

a familiar warning. "The 10 highest council taxes are all Labour and that is a message that every voter should remember," he said. "If they want to pay an extra £225 on band D, then all they have to do is vote Labour and it is guaranteed."

"Southwark, Islington, Wellingborough - probably almost any Labour authority you can mention would have significantly higher council tax than the previous year and higher than a comparable Conservative authority."

Wellingborough? Did the

Northamptonshire town really warrant such scorn? Frank Dobson, Labour's environment spokesman, went in search of statistics. Though Wellingborough council has 16 Labour members, it is in fact run by 15 Tories with the help of three independent, he said later.

John Major tells a lie nearly every time he speaks. He is trying to blame Labour for what the Tories are doing in Wellingborough. It's like blaming Labour for arms to Iraq and mad cow disease. I don't think he can help himself any more."

There is much more scepticism about using such a punishment for petty criminals who would otherwise merit jail, Mr Fletcher said. "In reality, the tag will never be an alternative and will just be added to existing community sentences. The only way it could be used as an alternative is by letting people out of prison early - but that wouldn't be politically acceptable."

Tory M...
case a...
Blair p...

Tagging may be in Tory election plans

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Legal Affairs Editor

A renewed commitment to the electronic tagging of young hoodlums may be set to find its way into the Conservative election manifesto under plans being drawn up by the Downing Street Policy Unit and the Home Office.

But the same old irony remains: that it is precisely these kinds of offenders - gangs of thugs who rampage through city centres or council estates - who are least likely to be suitable cases for the device.

No one, not least at the Home Office - which has already emphasised it cannot force courts to use it - appears to envisage an explosion in the numbers of louts and rowdies restrained by such means.

Under the pilot schemes already in existence, in which tagging is used to enforce curfew orders, offenders have cut off their electronic anklets for reasons such as being made to feel like a dog, or because of an attack by other youths.

While early technological hitches seem to have been ironed out, only 50 orders have resulted from the pilots in Reading, Norfolk and Manchester. They have already been extended once in an effort to drum up enthusiasm.

Much as the Tories want to use tagging as part of a crusade against anti-social and threatening behaviour, magistrates remain highly cautious about its place among other community sentences and sceptical about its use in all but a handful of cases.

In the meantime, the cost is enormous. Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, puts it at around £30,000 per tagger - based on the £1.3m committed to the pilot schemes. According to Mr Fletcher, that is twice as expensive as jail.

He also estimates that it would require at least 15,000 offenders to be tagged, instead of imprisoned, for the scheme to be cost-effective.

Home Office officials appear to be setting their ambitions somewhat lower at this stage, but in the meantime they are desperately seeking alternatives to expensive jail terms for less serious offenders.

The principal targets are not, as Tory politicians would like us to think, inner-city hoodlums, but the fine defaulters cluttering up the jails, often women and people who fail to pay their television licence. Two further target groups are offenders who might merit two to three months in jail for property-related crimes, and as a way of monitoring prisoners released on parole or licence.

Such plans at least have the advantage of not seeking to restrain the kind of offender who is inherently unstable, and often violent. Rosemary Thomson, chairman of the Magistrates' Association, said magistrates were also cautiously optimistic that tagging for fine defaulting might prove useful.

This comes at a time when magistrates appear to have dropped any faith in curfews and tagging as a means of preventing further offending, except in a rather limited number of cases. They now suggest it should be used purely as a punishment restricting liberty. It would not, however, produce money from people who had failed to pay.

There is much more scepticism about using such a punishment for petty criminals who would otherwise merit jail, Mr Fletcher said. "In reality, the tag will never be an alternative and will just be added to existing community sentences. The only way it could be used as an alternative is by letting people out of prison early - but that wouldn't be politically acceptable."

Arms-to-I...
is freed b...



Arms-to-I...
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Allason row Claim over 'malicious' report rejected

Tory MP loses case against Blair press aide

MICHAEL STREETER

The Conservative MP Rupert Allason faces legal costs of up to £250,000 after his claim of malicious falsehood against Tony Blair's press secretary and Mirror Group Newspapers was rejected by the High Court.

Judge Sir Maurice Drake ruled yesterday that the MP for Torbay had suffered no financial loss over a *Daily Mirror* story claiming that 50 MPs had signed a Commons motion attacking Mr Allason.

The judge also decided that the MP had already reached a settlement with MGN over inaccuracies in the article, which included a published correction and a letter of "assurance" from Alastair Campbell, then political editor.

Though ruling against Mr Allason, Sir Maurice agreed there had been falsehood and malice in the *Mirror* story and said that as a witness Mr Campbell had not been "wholly convincing or satisfactory". The judge said: "He did not impress me as a witness in whom I could feel 100 per cent confidence."

Afterwards Mr Allason, 44, who writes under the name Nigel West, said he was disappointed at the verdict but pleased the judge had found malice and falsehood in the article and hinted he may appeal. "This may not be the end of the story by a long chalk," he said. He also has two further libel actions outstanding.

Mr Campbell, who denied responsibility for the story and the *Early Day Motion* which caused it, said later that the case should never have been brought. "There never was a shred of evidence against me. I now intend to get back to doing what I do," Mr Mirror Group lawyer Martin Cruddace said costs for the case, awarded against Mr Allason, would be "up to £250,000". Costs for two preliminary hearings, awarded to Mr Allason, were "insignifi-

cant", he said, though the MP later disputed the amount of damages he would have to pay.

The six day high profile case centred on what the MGN's barrister Charles Gray QC described as a "minor, very short little item" in the *Daily Mirror* on 20 November 1992.

It claimed that 50 MPs had "challenged" Mr Allason to hand over his estimated £250,000 recent libel damages from MGN to struggling Maxwell pensioners.

The *Mirror* later published a correction, as only seven MPs had signed the motion, and Mr Campbell wrote to Mr Allason

ly up to no good" - with a handwritten EDM trying to get a MP to sign.

In his judgment Sir Maurice acknowledged the "utter contempt" Mr Galloway clearly had for Mr Campbell, who in turn disliked the MP. Though Mr Galloway had been an impressive witness, he was the only one claiming to have seen the canvassing, said the judge, and on the evidence, including Mr Campbell's strong denial, the "scales tilted" towards the defendant's case.

The judge ruled that Mr Campbell played no part in the EDM or the story, and despite "strongly malicious" feelings towards Mr Allason was not linked to the malice and falsity of the published story. Mr Campbell was also not involved. However, Sir Maurice said the *Daily Mirror* had been malicious because their employee David Bradshaw, Mr Campbell's deputy, had conceived the idea of the EDM, rushed into print without being able to check the number of signatures and had not approached Mr Allason.

The case failed because of the earlier settlement and the MP's failure to prove he lost a \$100,000 book deal as a direct result of the story.

During the hearing, Mr Allason had introduced a lighter note when he asked Mr Campbell whether he had ever written soft porn articles under the name "Rowena Gigolo". In his youth, yes, but not using that name, said Mr Campbell.

For the MP it is his first legal defeat in 23 cases, with "one draw". But he disputes he is "litigious". "I get things wrong and I have to make a correction in my book - I just expect other people to do the same."

With a hefty legal bill likely - potentially bigger than the £200,000 damages he won from MGN in 1992 - Mr Allason may be consoled that he represents himself and does not, as he puts it, "enrich lawyers".



Rupert Allason: Torbay MP faces costs of £250,000

assuring him he had not been behind the EDM or the story.

However, the MP later sued for malicious falsehood, claiming that Campbell had been seen in the Commons "soliciting" MP's to sign the motion and that *Daily Mirror* journalist Andy McSmith, now on the *Observer*, was also responsible for the article.

The most colourful evidence came from the Labour MP George Galloway, who described how he had seen Mr Campbell - who was "general-



Balancing act: Performers with the Chinese State Circus in rehearsal for their first tour outside China which is due to open tomorrow at the Brighton Festival. The circus will stay in the town until 26 May before a nationwide tour ends at the Edinburgh Festival. Photograph: Ralph Erle

BMA says no tests for mass killers

WILL BENNETT

Britain's doctors have called for stricter firearms controls but have warned that medical and psychiatric tests on gun licence applicants will not prevent mass killings such as those in Dunblane and Tasmania.

The British Medical Association has told a parliamentary committee investigating firearms laws that such crimes cannot be predicted and doctors do not want to be involved in testing would-be gun owners.

"It is not possible from a medical viewpoint to assist in any reliable way with the prediction of those positively safe with firearms nor those who are unsafe," said Dr Mac Armstrong, secretary of the BMA, in a letter to the House of Com-

mons Select Committee on Home Affairs.

The committee is investigating firearms laws in the wake of the massacre in Dunblane, in the Central region, in March when 16 children and their teacher were shot dead.

There have been suggestions that doctors should be required to assess the past medical and psychiatric history of gun certificate applicants.

The BMA published its evidence to the committee yesterday four days after the slaughter of 35 people by a gunman in Port Arthur in the Australian state of Tasmania again raised the issue of firearms controls.

After consulting BMA members Dr Armstrong told the committee that tests by doctors

would not prevent such tragedies happening and "we would be very reluctant to see the issue of any such certificate made dependent on a single medical report".

He added: "We would particularly resist any suggestions that a GP should be the sole medical referee for an application for a certificate permitting the possession of handguns or automatic or semi-automatic weapons. Even a specialist psychiatric mental state examination resulting in a 'normal' report will not obviate the possible future development of symptoms."

"Past history may give clues to future illness and past violent behaviour is considered the best predictor of future violent behaviour, but only a tiny

minority of patients with diagnosed psychiatric illness are dangerous and we suspect that most violent offences involving firearms are carried out by people who are not mentally ill."

He went on: "The BMA recommends that the Government considers further tightening of the regulations on the types of firearms legally available in this country."

The BMA is worried both that individual doctors could be blamed for approving certificates for gun owners who later commit murder and that the debate about how to prevent mass killings risks stigmatising the mentally ill.

Dr Armstrong said yesterday: "We are really rather concerned with the suggestion that these extraordinary and tragic events

have something to do with mental illness... There is an unfortunate possibility that if we let this drift that the public will come to associate mental illness with a rather medieval notion of danger."

The BMA also issued guidelines on the transplant of animal organs into humans yesterday. It said that such operations should only be carried out when there was a reasonable chance of success and that preference should be given to using human organs where possible.

There should be a supervisory body monitoring such cases, it said, patients should be told about the risks and allowed to refuse transplants from animals and children should not be involved in the early trials.

Arms-to-Iraq case Briton is freed by South Africa

CHRIS BLACKHURST
Westminster Correspondent

Paul Grecian, the British businessman who had his conviction for supplying arms to Iraq overturned on appeal in this country, only to be rearrested in South Africa on similar charges, was yesterday freed by a Johannesburg court.

Mr Grecian had been in prison in South Africa since last December, when he flew to the country for a holiday following his victory at the Court of Appeal. On landing at Johannesburg airport he was arrested by the South African authorities, pending a move by US prosecutors to have him extradited to face charges there.

In rejecting the extradition application, Danie Oberholzer, the magistrate in Kempton Park, on the outskirts of Johannesburg, said the offences Mr Grecian had been charged with in the US would not have amounted to crimes if they had



Paul Grecian: Arrested on arrival in Johannesburg

been committed in South Africa.

"I really did not expect to get a result today - it comes as a total surprise," said Mr Grecian. He faced four charges in the US: sending weapons to Iraq;

conspiracy, bank fraud and making a false statement. "The magistrate found they were not extraditable offences," said his South African lawyer, Peter Reynolds.

It was unlikely, said Mr Reynolds, that his client would return to Britain or leave South Africa immediately for fear of still being pursued by the US authorities. "He will stay here until the situation becomes clear - he needs an assurance of safe passage," said Mr Reynolds.

Until the US lifts the indictment and he is removed from the Interpol "red notice" list he could be arrested again. "It is going to mean that I am not going to do much travelling beyond the shores of the UK and South Africa," said Mr Grecian.

In 1992, Mr Grecian and two former colleagues, Bryan Mason and Stuart Blackledge, pleaded guilty at Reading Crown Court in trying to smuggle equipment to build an ar-

tillery fuse assembly line to Iraq via Jordan. They only pleaded guilty after the Government used Public Interest Immunity Certificates preventing Whitehall officials from giving evidence the exports had previously been cleared by the Department of Trade and Industry and Ministry of Defence.

Last December, the three had their convictions quashed by the Court of Appeal. Mr Grecian said yesterday he believed his detention in South Africa and the US's refusal, following his successful appeal, to drop the charges, was political.

"Undoubtedly there were political elements to it," he said. "When a third country becomes embroiled in a situation like this, which at the end of the day is none of their business, one has to take into account what political pressures the likes of the United States would try to bring to bear to ensure my extradition."

Tycoon 'forced girl into sex threesome'

A 20-year-old woman sobbed yesterday as she told a jury she was raped by the tycoon Owen Oyston during a three-in-a-bed sex session when she was just 16.

She described how she sat and watched the 62-year-old multimillionaire have sex with another woman in his four-poster bed before she was ordered to take her clothes off and join them.

The woman, who had been training to be a model, told Liverpool Crown Court that Mr Oyston, the Blackpool Football Club chairman, had earlier forced her into oral sex as just they were driven to his country mansion in the middle of the night.

The woman insisted: "I didn't even know him. I had never spoken to him. He didn't know me. He treated me as if I were an object and I'm not... I'm not."

Mr Oyston, of Cloughton Hall, near Lancaster, denies raping and indecently assaulting the woman between October 1991 and December 1992.

He also denies raping an 18-year-old model, who has already given evidence.

The woman told Liverpool Crown Court yesterday how she joined the Manchester agency, Model Team International, as a 14-year-old. She was introduced to Mr Oyston by agency boss Peter Martin as "someone very important and dead rich".

On about the third occasion she met him, she accompanied Mr Martin, Mr Oyston and a woman called Lisa to Mr Oyston's mansion. She said Mr Oyston had sex with Lisa and then ordered her to join them in bed. Asked why she replied: "Because I was scared. Because I was forced. Because I was in a house in a bed with a guy I didn't even know, an old man, I didn't know old men did things like that. I was 16 years old and he didn't give a damn."

The trial continues today.

Glory revealed of church's faded relic

A faded tapestry which had hung for centuries on the wall of a remote rural church without attracting any more than passing attention has been identified as a 16th century masterpiece worth an estimated £250,000.

The Rev David Hayes, vicar of the 14th century St Andrew's church at Presteigne, on the Herefordshire-Welsh border, said: "We knew it was special but not this special."

Its value was eventually realised by a local historian Catherine Owens, who discovered that the 3 sq metre Flemish tapestry - depicting Christ on a donkey - was woven in Antwerp in 1511, and is one of only three similar works in the world.

It was believed they were made originally to hang in Canterbury Cathedral but were later moved.

One of the others hangs in Aix-en-Provence in southern

France and the third in the fine arts museum in San Francisco.

Mr Hayes, 58, added: "We were shocked and delighted to discover its true value. Like many churches we face a programme of major building work but we haven't even discussed the tapestry's future. Selling is obviously one of the options that we will have to look at."

Ms Owens, 30, said: "Ever since I was a child it has been in the church. There were all sorts of stories about it and I decided to find out the truth."

"As I looked into it the more amazed I became. I could not believe its value. It is a wonderful work."

Ironically the discovery has deprived parishioners of their treasure. Mr Hayes said: "We could not just ignore the security needs in this day and age and leave it hanging in the church. It has been removed to a place of safety while we decide on its future."

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news

Cantona fan is jailed for attacking lawyer

The football fan who provoked Manchester United's Eric Cantona to launch his infamous kung-fu kick was jailed for seven days for contempt of court yesterday after attacking a lawyer when he appeared for sentence.

Crystal Palace supporter, Matthew Simmons, 21, hurled himself, shouting, at 55-year-old prosecuting counsel Jeffrey McCann in front of three magistrates at Croydon Magistrates Court in south London.

The attack came after the magistrates ruled that Simmons was guilty of two charges of using threatening words and behaviour during the Cantona incident at Selhurst Park on 25 January 1995.

Mr McCann got to his feet and started to apply for an order under the Public Order Act excluding Simmons from football grounds when Simmons leapt over a bench at him.

As police rushed towards him, Simmons swung his legs round over the bench, appearing to kick Mr McCann in the chest. As Mr McCann tried to get away, Simmons - his arms and legs flailing - held on to his collar. Mr McCann broke free as police overpowered Simmons and led him away in handcuffs. Simmons shouted: "I am innocent. I swear on the bible. You press. You are scum."

The chairman of the bench, Mary Richards, jailing Simmons for seven days for contempt, said: "Your violent outburst today was an obvious and serious contempt of court. We feel a turn of custody is appropriate."

For his offences at Selhurst Park, the magistrates fined him £500 and ordered him to pay £200 costs for the first, more serious charge of using threatening, obscene or insulting words of behaviour likely to cause immediately unlawful violence by another person.

They ruled there should be no penalty for the second offence of using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour within the hearing or sight of a person likely to be caused harassment, alarm or distress.

They also made an order excluding him from all football matches for 12 months.

Adam Davis, defending Simmons, said his client was sorry for his attack on Mr McCann. "He would like to apologise to the court and to the members of the public and especially to Mr McCann. This certainly doesn't excuse his behaviour."

He said Simmons had been under immense pressure and had suffered death threats since the Cantona incident. It had been suggested by the press that he was in some way responsible



Flashpoint: Eric Cantona's infamous attack on Simmons

for the death of a Crystal Palace fan in Birmingham in April last year, said Mr Davis. "I have spoken to the police force. They believe he has coped admirably with the pressure that has been heaped on him."

He said that recently Simmons had been hospitalised as a result of a severe panic attack which required treatment.

He said his client had not attempted to strike Mr McCann.

Mr McCann said of yesterday's attack: "I am content to accept his apology. I have no intention of pressing charges. I am not injured in any way."

In mitigation for the two offences of using threatening words and behaviour at Selhurst Park, Mr Davis said: "I am sure you will bear in mind what happened to the other party in this matter. You will also bear in mind that Mr Simmons would not have found himself in the position he is in today but for Mr Cantona's actions."

He said that since the Selhurst Park incident, Simmons had lost his job as a double-glazing fitter and was now training in word processing.

Outside court, Sonia Sims, solicitor for Simmons, said he continued to maintain his innocence on the charges of using threatening words or behaviour. "He will now consider his position as far as an appeal is concerned."

Business award: Widow takes centre stage with success



Top act: Janet Holmes à Court celebrates her award as Businesswoman of the Year

Photograph: Geraint Lewis

Theatre 'queen' takes a bow

Janet Holmes à Court, the "Queen of Shaftesbury Avenue", has been named Businesswoman of the Year.

The widow of Robert Holmes à Court and owner of 10 West End theatres received her award at a presentation at Claridges, in London, yesterday. Previous winners of the award, organised by Vogue Cliquet, include the Body Shop's Anita Roddick, Sophie Mirman of the Sock Shop and Pineapple founder Debbie Moore.

Mrs Holmes à Court took over the running of her husband's £350m Heytesbury Holdings business empire after his death from a heart attack in 1990. She reshaped the group which along with Stoll Moss Theatres - London's largest theatre group - includes construction and engineering company John Holland and the Heytesbury Pastoral Group which owns 1.1 per cent of

Australia's land mass. An investment programme of £11m in the theatre group has increased Stoll Moss operating profits by 107 per cent.

A spokeswoman for Vogue Cliquet said Mrs Holmes à Court was almost a "mirror image" of Nicole Ponsardin in whose memory the awards were set up. Mme Ponsardin took over the running of her husband's vineyards on his death in 1985 and, known as Veuve Cliquet, built up a champagne house of international standing.

Other women shortlisted for the award were: Linda Allen, managing director of Howard Long International; Annoushka Ducas, founder of Links of London; Dr Mary-Lorraine Hughes, chief executive of Portmation Poteries; and Rosalyn Wilton, managing director of Reuters Transaction Products. Last year's winner was Patricia Vaz, head of British Telecom's payphones business.

Chef who tried to kill fiancée jailed

A chef was yesterday jailed for eight years for attempting to murder his bride-to-be and mother of his two children to benefit from her life insurance.

Andrew McNeill, 31, tried to throttle Paula Kew with her scarf as she returned home from visiting her parents to show them her wedding dress, the Old Bailey was told.

"You lay in wait for the woman you were to marry two months on and you strangled her close to death," said Judge Peter Beaumont. He added that the evidence that McNeill's motive had been for financial gain was "compelling".

McNeill had only failed to kill her because of the "fortuitous" arrival of her sister-in-law at their house in Camberley, Surrey. Miss Kew told the court that

all she remembered of the attack was seeing McNeill's lips moving as she lay on the bathroom floor. "But I could not hear him. As far as I was concerned I was dead."

The prosecution had told the court McNeill had financial problems and was in debt.

McNeill had denied attempted murder on 12 February last year. Two months earlier he had taken out life insurance policies to provide more than £15,000 a year in the event of his wife's death. The couple were due to marry in April.

When arrested, McNeill allegedly told police he had arrived home to find the children screaming in the car outside the house. The front door was ajar and his fiancée's body was blocking the hallway.

DAILY POEM

End of the week

By Miroslav Holub

The foundation course is the time-table which sometimes applies from Monday to Friday, sometimes on Saturday, and exceptionally on Sunday, when He rested from all His works,

which we carry in a forgotten pocket so that usually we miss our connection.

But we get there all the same.

It'll be Sunday again, the day of willed songs. In the Spanish Square they will burn eighteen Jewish Marranos in honour of the marriage of Maria Luisa and Carlos. We will not even stop but go back home by a back street, deep in thought.

Miroslav Holub is Czech Republic's most important poet and also one of her leading scientists. Inspired by Homer and Virgil as a boy, he began to write verse in his school days and has produced 14 collections of poetry, although his work was banned in Czechoslovakia between 1970 and 1980. This poem is taken from his latest collection, published at the end of May. Stop-pressed to 87p (Bloodaxe, £7.95) and he will be reading from this collection tomorrow in the Old Operating Theatre, 9a St Thomas Street, London SE1 9RY (0171 955 4791) at 7.30pm.

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مكتبة الصلح

BR clerk seeks travel rights for lesbian partner

An industrial tribunal was told yesterday that a lesbian couple had been unfairly discriminated against by British Rail in being refused travel concessions.

In what is being seen as a landmark case Lisa Grant, 28, a Southampton Central station booking clerk, is claiming her partner, Jill Percy, 36, is entitled to the same travel benefits as are given to the partners of heterosexuals.

Cherie Booth QC, wife of the Labour leader, Tony Blair, told the tribunal at Southampton that it was a novel and interesting case brought on two bases, one under the Equal Pay Act and the other under European law.

She said that the "fine words" of British Rail's equal opportunities policy had not come up to scratch in practice.

The case was about the travel concessions policy for employees of British Rail as it was then, and now South West Trains Limited.

Ms Booth said the travel concession privilege was given in respect of long-term partners in stable relationships, which was taken to mean relationships of two years or more. It was a benefit which was of considerable worth and could amount to a great saving in cash.

The benefit applied to partners of the opposite sex, Ms Booth said.

"What happened in this case was the applicant applied for a travel concession for Jillian Percy," she said. Ms Grant declared she lived with Ms Percy, described as her common law spouse, and had done for two years or more.

Ms Booth said Ms Grant contrasted her position with that of a male employee, Mr Potter, who had a common law spouse and had been granted travel facilities for her.

The QC referred to British



Lisa Grant (above) and Jill Percy: Landmark case



Rail's equal opportunities policy document which spoke of ending unfair discrimination and said the only justifiable reasons for discriminating was the inability to do the job.

It said that discrimination on any other grounds was against policy and could be illegal.

"Unfortunately for Ms Grant they were fine words which did not come up to scratch in practice," said Ms Booth.

She said the policy talked of

sexual preferences and she added: "It seems that in April 1994 the Railways Board were concerned to widen and take into account issues of sexual preference."

Nicholas Underhill QC, for South West Trains, said that neither English law nor European Union law prohibited discrimination against homosexuals. "Obviously different views are possible about whether it should do so but at present it does not," he said.

Mr Underhill said his submission had already been decided in his favour by the Employment Appeal Tribunal and by the Court of Appeal, and the tribunal was bound by those decisions.

He told the tribunal: "You should not be tempted to attempt to fill gaps in the legislation which are clearly political questions. The right way to outlaw discrimination against homosexuals is to do it through Parliament."

After hearing legal submissions from both sides, the tribunal chairman, Ian Edwards, said the tribunal would reserve its decision and the hearing concluded for the day.

After the hearing, Ms Percy said she and Ms Grant had expected to have to await judgment on their case.

But she added: "I am confident sooner or later we will win because it is blatantly so unjust."

Angela Mason, executive director of Stowe, a pressure group for lesbian and gay equality, which is supporting the two women, said of Ms Booth: "She is a professional barrister. She is very eminent in her field and she did a very competent job."

It could be up to six weeks before the tribunal's decision is announced. One option the tribunal could take is to refer the matter to the European Court.



Sales pitch: A statue of Flora being towed into position for a Phillips auction of Chistone garden ornaments, antique furnishings and paintings at the company's former base at Sprivers, a National Trust house at Horsmonden, Kent. Photograph: Nicholas Turpin

Girl, 10, found by father's body in ravine

A 10-year-old girl spent 30 hours by her father's body after he plunged into a raging torrent during a walk in a national park on Majorca.

Katia Scallan watched as her 35-year-old father Neil slipped on a path and plunged into the Torreote de Parels in the park in the mountains north of the island. As she scrambled down the ravine to her father, her mother, Alex, 34, who was carrying the couple's two-year-old daughter Michaela, walked on - unaware of the tragedy unfolding behind her.

Mrs Scallan, of Bishopston,

Bristol, ran to a restaurant in the resort of Calla Millor to raise the alarm after realising that her husband and older daughter were missing. But Spanish police and rescue workers were unable to launch a search immediately because the dark made it too dangerous in the mountainous terrain.

A local British resident Humphrey Carter said: "It is a great gorge - it's a dangerous place, and the police wouldn't want to take risks up there."

The search was finally mounted at first light on Wednesday - and rescuers

found Katia by the body of her father in the afternoon. Katia, who suffered severe shock, was yesterday recovering in hospital in Palma.

A Foreign Office spokesman said: "This is a terribly tragic accident. Her father apparently fell and she spent the rest of the night with him."

The British Consul in Palma was yesterday preparing to fly Mrs Scallan and her two daughters home.

A spokesman for the Spanish Civil Guard said it was not yet clear whether Mr Scallan was killed by his fall or drowned

in the torrent. Shocked relatives were anxiously waiting news from Majorca at the Scallan family's home.

The blinds were drawn on every window in the neat end of terrace house where Mrs Scallan's two distraught sisters were hoping she would telephone them.

Younger sister Emma Bevin sobbed as she told how they had learned of the tragedy only through the newspapers.

"We are waiting for Alex to contact us. We have no more information than is in the press," she said. She and her sister

ter were too distressed to say any more to reporters. The family had been due to return home on Sunday from the two-week holiday.

A neighbour, Helen Jones, who teaches Katia the piano, said the child had talked excitedly of her holiday plans. Katia had explained that she would have to miss lessons.

"She told me how she was looking forward to her trip," Mrs Jones said.

Another neighbour, Andrew Leggett, said: "This is really shocking news. They are a lovely family."

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Above & below: Four Seasons Hotel, Tokyo



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international



Close encounter: A Boeing 727 belonging to Fly airline of Brazil skids into a road at take-off from Quito airport, Ecuador, on Wednesday. Ninety people were on board the flight, including members of the Brazilian soccer team. One player broke a leg. Photograph: Dolores Ochoa/AP

Swiss banks let search begin for lost Jewish cash

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

In an unprecedented lifting of their country's strict banking secrecy, Swiss bankers have agreed to set up an independent body with "unfettered access" to search for millions - perhaps billions - of unclaimed and untraced dollars allegedly deposited in Switzerland by victims of the Holocaust.

Representatives of the World Jewish Congress, the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, and the Swiss Bankers Association, signed a two-page memorandum of agreement on determining Jewish assets held in Swiss banks in New York yesterday. It provides for a commission with three members appointed by the association and three by the World Jewish Congress (WJC) and other Jewish organisations, whose auditors would have powers to examine every individual account which has lain dormant since the end of the war.

The commission will also work with the Swiss government to find out whether accounts at Swiss banks and other financial institutions contain money, bul-

lion or other assets stolen by the Nazis and deposited there for safekeeping before the Allies overran the Third Reich in 1945.

Thus, for the time being ends a controversy which last month found its way into the White House and the US Congress, as President Bill Clinton threw his weight behind the efforts of the WJC for full disclosure, and the Senate Banking Committee called a special hearing which virtually accused the association of a deliberate cover-up.

Estimates of how much money is involved vary wildly. A survey by the Swiss banks themselves, made public last September, turned up only 775 accounts which had not been touched for half a century, containing \$34m (£22m) and presumably belonging to Holocaust victims.

But that estimate was derided by Jewish leaders here with the WJC president, Edgar Bronfman, claiming the true figure was probably "several billions" worth of dollars, gold, paintings and other valuables entrusted to Swiss banks. They insist the meagre sums un-

earthed so far reflect only accounts opened in person by Holocaust victims. Countless others, they argue, were opened by Swiss-based trustees and lawyers on behalf of Jews scattered across Europe whose names did not feature on them.

What indirect evidence there is suggests the sum could far exceed \$34m - a recently declassified US Treasury document from 1945 for instance claims one Swiss bank alone had 182 accounts on its books, mostly from Romanian Jews. Totalling \$2m at the time, these would now be worth \$20m with accrued interest.

The irony is that the Swiss banking secrecy laws were introduced in the 1830s with the intention of attracting money from Jews and others fleeing the rise of the Nazis. But these same laws have made it difficult for relatives of victims to recover the assets, as the banks have demanded death certificates and other documents either destroyed or lost because of the war. Jewish organisations have also complained at the £160 fee routinely charged by the banks for account searches.

Nurses face abuse for treating gunman

ROBERT MILLIKEN
Hobart

As Tasmania was still struggling to face the future after the massacre of 35 people at Port Arthur, tensions mounted yesterday at the Hobart hospital where the man accused of the killings is a patient.

Meanwhile, some marketing consultants have ghoulishly suggested that Port Arthur should

capitalise on the massacre and incorporate its description into future tours, along with the sites where convicts were kept in chains and flogged.

Five days after the horror at the island state's main tourist attraction, Martin Bryant, 28, remained under police guard in the Royal Hobart Hospital, being treated for severe burns which he suffered at the climax of last Sunday's siege.

Nurses at the hospital complained yesterday that people were abusing them in the streets for continuing to treat a man whom Tasmania's half-million people have collectively branded the personification of evil.

The hospital itself has received threatening telephone calls. Helen Gray, secretary of the Tasmanian nurses' union, said: "All nurses share the frustration and abhorrence at what has hap-

pened. They also have a duty to tend anyone put under their care. So far, no one has refused treatment to this patient."

The Tasmanian authorities are under strong pressure to move Bryant from the hospital, where some of the 19 people injured in the shooting spree are undergoing treatment for bullet wounds. Now he has been formally charged with one of the killings, preparations are being

made to move him to a prison hospital.

John Howard, the Australian Prime Minister, is expected to propose that Australia adopt uniform gun control laws. The New South Wales authorities yesterday agreed to surrender its powers over firearms to Canberra, and called on other states to do the same, although Tasmania's state government said it would not follow suit.

Republicans panic as Dole faces fading fortunes

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

Only a year ago, they ruled Capitol Hill and the White House appeared ripe for the taking. Today Speaker Newt Gingrich is arguably the least loved public figure in America, their Presidential aspirant Bob Dole trails Bill Clinton by more than 20 per cent in the polls, and Republicans contemplate the previously unthinkable - that the Democrats may well win back Congress.

Six months still remain before election day on November 5, time enough for the economy, Whitewater, or events in Bosnia, Russia or the Middle East to redraw the political landscape; but rarely in history have the fortunes of the two major US parties so swiftly and completely reversed.

In the spring of 1995, Republican and Democratic pundits alike were proclaiming a secular change in national politics, and a South returning to the Republican fold after more than a century, that would virtually guarantee the party a lock on power for decades. Today the calculation is very different and increasingly desperate: how to prevent the loss of just 19 seats that would hand the House of Representatives back to the Democrats.

For the moment at least, that task looks mighty hard. The problem is a vicious circle which the party shows no sign of breaking: an unpopular, Republican Congress, saddled with an image of extremism and intolerance, drags down Mr Dole - whose own shortcomings as campaigner and projector of a clear-cut message cast a pallor on the prospects of Republican Congressmen and Senators themselves running for re-election. In voting preferences for the 435 House races, the Republicans now trail Democrats nationally by seven points.

The man in the trickiest position is Mr Dole. Far from his runaway victory in the primaries serving as a springboard, it has proved a trapdoor into an opinion poll abyss. According to a CNN/USA Today poll this week, Mr Clinton's lead has widened to 21 points, a gap at this stage which has never been closed in any recent election.

Some sanguine Republicans point to the 19 point advantage which Michael Dukakis briefly enjoyed over George Bush in the summer of 1988 before being soundly defeated that November. What they do not mention however is that Mr Bush was facing one of the poorest campaigners of recent times. Alas for Mr Dole, he must face one of the very best.

The result has been creeping panic, verging on open rebellion. Emerging briefly from a self-imposed political purdah last week, Mr Gingrich pronounced the party to be "in a

THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS '96

funk." A recent TV interview by Mr Dole was described by the Republican columnist Bob Novak as the "worst single television interview" by a television candidate in 20 years, reflecting "disorganisation, lack of discipline and failure to articulate a coherent message."

But how is Mr Dole to put that right? Step down as Senate majority leader, say some, and get out into the country to project a vision for the country. Shedding the mantle of dour legislator unable to look beyond the fine print of a legislative amendment. But that overlooks two uncomfortable realities, say those who want Mr Dole to stay put here: For a man who is a wretched campaigner, the Senate floor is a better theatre - and the exposure is free. After an especially expensive primary season, Mr Dole has no



Bob Dole: Worst single television interview

money to spend on campaigning and advertising.

Meanwhile, as that argument continues, the Kansas Senator is signally failing to display the his vaunted mastery of the Senate. On a host of issues, ranging from the minimum wage to health care reform, he has been stymied and outmanoeuvred - sometimes by a Democratic Senate minority, sometimes by opponents within Republican ranks.

As he conducts Congressional business, Mr Dole must also tend to party affairs, above all the August nominating convention which, along with his choice of Vice President, will be his great opportunity to mobilise his dispirited troops. But at the most untimely moment, the abortion issue again threatens to create turmoil in San Diego.

The bugbear, as in the past, is the traditional clause in the party platform calling for a constitutional ban on abortion.

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acceptance and surgery.
"It was like coming home," she said. "When I realised that

Court of Justice ruling on the behaviour of the school directors breached the 1976 Euro-

that the Government would have to amend legislation.

such as a major birth certificates and passports.

missioning IRA weapons.

سكنا من الصلح

Chirac's year of living dangerously

The French are weighing their President's record, Mary Dejevsky reports from Paris

The Elysée is not making a big fuss: Jacques Chirac himself has hardly mentioned the subject, but the first anniversary of his election as President of France is almost upon us, and France's politicians, pollsters and commentators are busy drawing up the balance sheet.

Mr Chirac's own Gaullist (RPR) party is feeling reasonably content, if only to be back in power, and is holding a celebratory national council meeting in Paris on Sunday. The Gaullists' coalition partners, the UDF, have just elected a new leader and have troubles enough without worrying unduly about a president with six more years of his term to run. The *de facto* opposition leader and defeated presidential candidate, Lionel Jospin, snipes from the sidelines about Mr Chirac's broken election promises, but has produced no convincing alternative platform.

On the streets, the view is less divided along party lines and more uniform, but it contains one big and abiding contradiction. One year on, people tend to like Mr Chirac, but they are disappointed with what he has actually done.

The polling organisation BVA, for the magazine *Paris Match*, found that a large majority of those polled (83 per cent) said they found Mr Chirac "dynamic", slightly fewer found him "nice" (76 per cent) and "close to the people" (68 per cent). However, 66 per cent said that on economic and social policy things had gone "worse than expected".

These findings mask a bumpy ride for the President. Over the summer and autumn, with the decision taken to conduct a last series of nuclear tests, an Algerian-inspired fundamentalist bombing campaign in progress, and an upsurge of labour unrest in gestation, Mr Chirac's popularity slumped. His recent return above 50 per cent has been a feat, not least because his first year has delivered in many instances the precise opposite of what he promised during the election campaign.

The priorities of his election



Bumpy ride: For Jacques Chirac (right) the year has been marked by protest at nuclear testing (left) and (below, from left) the Paris bombing and industrial unrest



campaign – and the points on which voters, especially younger voters, are thought to have elected him – were his pledges to reduce unemployment, narrow what were seen as growing social divisions and reduce taxes. He also promised a referendum on education reform.

In fact, unemployment increased for 11 months, before registering a very small 4,000 fall in March; high-profile and expensive job-creation schemes are treated with growing public scepticism. And a promised bill to combat "social exclusion" has not materialised.

Taxes have been raised: 2 per cent went on value added tax in August; a special tax of 0.5 per cent on total income was introduced in February to help pay off the social security debt. The ban of employers' lives – their contribution to employees' national insurance and health costs – has not been reduced. A promised tax reform was postponed and even though Mr Chirac amended the constitution last summer to make such a reform possible, the referendum on education seems further away than ever.

Instead, Mr Chirac set about abolishing conscription – a decision that may in time be-



come a hallmark of his presidency but which has thoroughly divided French opinion.

Aside from the decision on conscription, the real achievements of Mr Chirac's first year are international. While the decision to resume nuclear testing was a huge – and unanti-



ipated – diplomatic liability, it sent the message that France was back on the international stage, as awkward and Paris-centred as ever.

Mr Chirac's unilateral *démarche* on Bosnia after the "humiliation" of French soldiers, and on Lebanon after a



personal diplomatic initiative risked ridicule, eschewed European team-playing and irritated Washington. Probably, though, both moves made a difference.

In Europe, Mr Chirac managed to opt out of much of the Schengen agreement on open



European borders without being dubbed anti-European. He brought France back into the leading structures of Nato without being condemned for betraying Gaullism.

Further afield, he worked to restore "special relations" with the Francophone world and

other traditional areas of French influence.

Altogether, Jacques Chirac emerges from his first year as a very old-fashioned sort of French president: an embodiment of French interests and style abroad; an aspiring advocate for "the people" at home. Silent during the labour unrest of the winter, he did not publicly support the government's tough line and he kept channels open to the unions and strikers. A recent attack on hypermarkets as the scourge of French towns was applauded because all French shoppers imagine themselves patronising small shops – even as they set off to the hypermarket.

Other concerns – like balancing the budget, meeting the Maastricht criteria, making the welfare system solvent – are left increasingly to the government. Mr Chirac can then urge from the sidelines: don't raise taxes, don't ration healthcare, don't let small traders go out of business.

His one looming problem is that if his own popularity continues to be bought at the cost of his government's unpopularity, the right could lose its parliamentary majority in two years' time – and with it the right to govern.

IN BRIEF

Zulus arrested for royal attack

Durban — Police raided a workers' dormitory controlled by Zulu nationalists to arrest nine men in connection with last week's attack on the Zulu royal family. The arrests came amid rising tension in the Zulu homeland in KwaZulu-Natal province four weeks before scheduled local government elections considered a showdown between the Zulu nationalist Inkatha Freedom Party and the rival African National Congress. **AP**

Muslims indicted

The Hague — Bosnia has arrested two Muslims indicted by the UN criminal tribunal for former Yugoslavia for war crimes against Serbs. A tribunal spokesman identified the two men as Hazim Delic and Esad Landzo who were indicted along with two other suspects for crimes allegedly committed at the Celebici prison camp at Konjic in central Bosnia in 1992. **Reuters**

Albanian Exchange

Tirana — The Albanian National Bank yesterday opened a stock exchange, the first in the history of Albania, where the economy is struggling to follow the free-market rules. **AP**

Mexican drug bust

Washington — Federal agents arrested dozens of people around the country the backdrop of a coast-to-coast Mexican Columbian cocaine ring. Code-named "Zorro II" the operation is the first to arrest Mexican drug couriers and dealers and Colombian traffickers from the country "manager" down to street-level distributors. Drug Enforcement Administration officials said. **AP**

CIA director search

Rock Point, Maryland — As the search for former CIA Director William Colby was sealed back, his wife said she believed he was still alive. "Bill" survived parachuting into France and Norway to fight the Germans in World War II. He survived two tours of duty in Vietnam and a horrible mugging... If he survived all that, he can survive tipping over in a canoe. Sally Shelton-Colby said. **AP**

Dead and alive

Manila — Mourners at a wake for a murdered Filipina waitress were stunned yesterday when the woman they were grieving for walked in very much alive. **Reuters**

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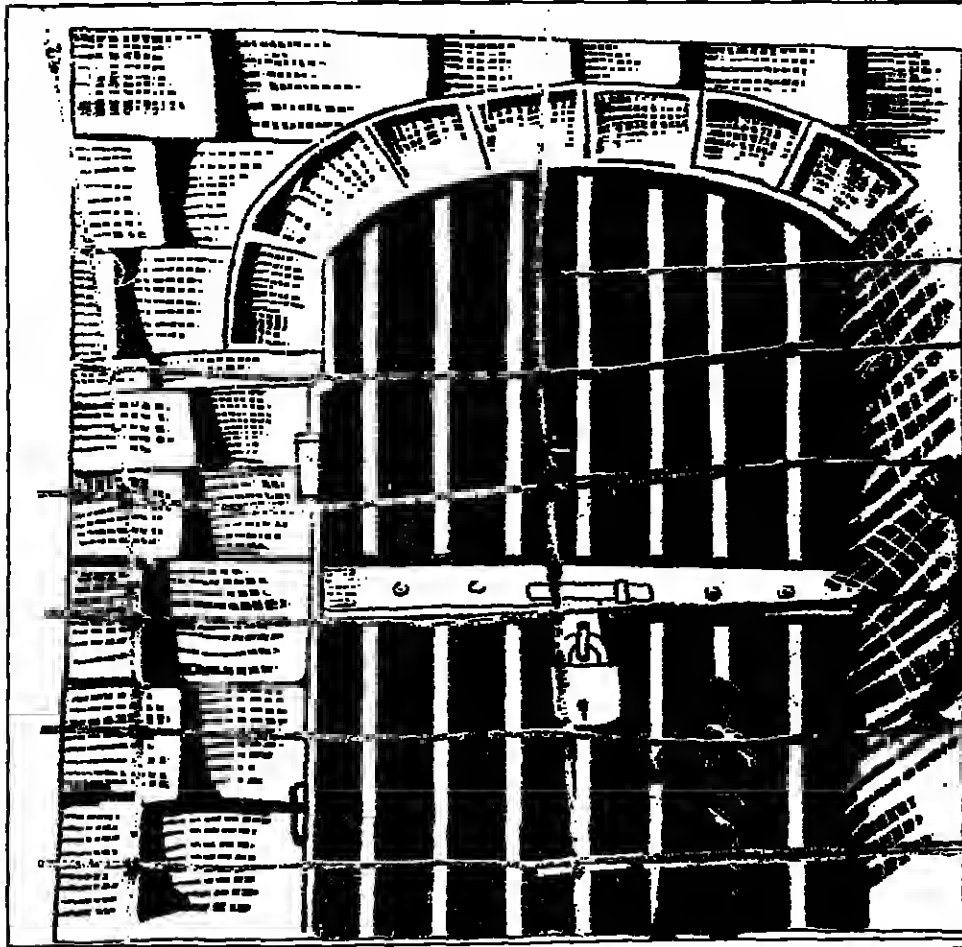
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Behind bars: Men working on a billboard in Bombay urging voters to shun corrupt candidates

Photograph: Savita Kirloskar/Reuters

Fair play keeps polls calm

TIM MCGIRK
New Delhi

Indian elections: Millions vote in searing heat and cyclone

Maybe it had to do with the orders for Indian police to shoot on sight. Or the "preventive" arrest of 300,000 suspected troublemakers around the country. But the second round of India's general elections passed off yesterday without the customary killings and hired thugs smashing up polling booths.

Heated election contests in the states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu were expected to spill into violence. Bihar is usually the most troublesome state at election time. The private armies of feudal landlords and revolutionary peasants have carved up this north Indian state along the Ganges river and, until yesterday, the winning candidate was not the man with the best record but he who could muster the biggest firepower.

Of the seven Indians killed during polling yesterday, six

were from Bihar. Four died in clashes between rival political gangs, and the other two were would-be bombers who blew themselves up. In Andhra Pradesh, a police officer was killed by a landmine planted by Naxalite revolutionaries who oppose the elections. Officials said that having only seven deaths during this colossal democratic exercise, which covered 17 states and involved 220 million registered voters, was as close to a peaceful election as they dared to hope for.

The elections went off smoothly not only because of tight security—over 600,000 police and paramilitary forces were deployed for poll duty—but also because India's autocratic chief election commissioner, TN Seshan, has scared politicians into playing fairly.

Lok Sabha (parliament). If so, Mr Rao, 73, is likely to be ousted as Congress party leader.

In the election run-up, Mr Rao has been dogged by bribery and housing scandals, his party lieutenants rebelled against him, and yesterday an arrest warrant was issued on the Prime Minister's favourite guru, Chandraswami.

A "godman", as the Indian press calls him, who is better known for his power-broking abilities than compassion, Chandraswami is accused of conspiracy to swindle \$100,000 (£66,500) from an Indian residing in Britain. Most damning of all for Mr Rao, the magistrate took a swipe at the Central Bureau of Investigation—which answers directly to the Prime Minister—for "dilly-dallying" in probing the swami's controversial activities.

The main opposition party, the right-wing Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party, yesterday demanded Mr Rao resign even before the next round of polls. His

campaign slogan is "Stability". But judging from the chaos in his party and government, many Indians are beginning to doubt whether Mr Rao can deliver the stability India so urgently needs.

Franz fails the fun test

If anyone is harbouring plans to laugh at the Austrian Chancellor, Franz Vranitzky, then here is a friendly piece of advice: think again. The Chancellor likes to be taken seriously and will go to considerable lengths to make sure his dignity is upheld. In particular, it is important to try not to think of him without any clothes on.

Hubertus Czernin, editor in chief of the top Austrian news magazine, *Profil*, encouraged this little fantasy among his readers recently when he used a picture of the Chancellor's head superimposed on a naked male body, on the front cover of the March issue. He was portrayed as chubby, hairy, and modest—he was covering "his" genitals with "his" hands.

Now, according to *Profil* staff, Mr Czernin has been sacked and the Chancellor's office is taking legal action. The caption next to the photo-montage read: "How [Vice-Chancellor] Wolfgang Schüssel stripped shirt and trousers off Franz Vranitzky." This was a reference to the Social Democratic Chancellor's alleged concessions in coalition talks with Mr Schüssel's conservative People's Party. The sacking triggered an outcry.

The editorial staff of *Profil* is most vehemently opposed to the firing of Hubertus Czernin, the journalists said in a statement.

Mr Czernin has apologised to Mr Vranitzky, but declined to make any public statement



Vranitzky as he might be if he had a different body

on the reports of his sacking. Somewhat surprisingly, the far-right Freedom Party leader Jörg Haider said he backed Mr Czernin in the controversy. While he did not agree with the editor's political views, Mr Haider said he would do his utmost to ensure that freedom of expression was guaranteed.

They are also struggling with issues of censorship and press freedom in Poland. Nearly half of the staff of a leading newspaper, *Zycie Warszawy*, said they were resigning this week in protest over a change in policy forced by a new owner. The businessman Zbigniew Jakubas has announced plans to

replace the editor-in-chief and to change the paper's profile to make it "objective, neutral and apolitical". According to the journalists, this is code for submissively pro-government.

Mr Jakubas is apparently upset by a perceived right-wing tendency in the paper. The journalists fear that Zycie will no longer deal with subjects that make the new rulers feel uncomfortable. The newspaper was attacked by former communists last year about the publishing articles about the ruling coalition of the ex-communist Democratic Left Alliance and the Polish Peasants' Party.

"The change of profile of Zycie is part of the offensive of the ruling coalition against the Polish media," the journalists warned, adding that the appointment in mid-April of pro-Peasants' Party politician Ryszard Miazek as head of public television was part of a government attempt to gain wider control of the media. Mr Miazek has already announced that public television should serve the government.

Dart Reynolds' financial problems appear to be getting worse. In 1994 his lawyers asked a judge to relieve the actor of an \$11,000 (£7,300) a month alimony payment to the actress Loni Anderson, saying he was \$11.8m in debt. Now foreclosure proceedings have been launched against Reynolds, who has allegedly failed to make monthly payments of \$8,500 on his \$2.25m Florida ranch since August last year. Reynolds has been asked to pay \$1.49m, including interest since July, on a \$1.5m loan he took out in May 1994.

James Roberts

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Barbie's invas

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Poles seek their place at heart of Europe

From the terrace of his presidential palace, Alexander Kwasniewski peers towards the West, and raises a champagne glass to Europe. But what, exactly, is this "Europe" that the new Polish President, a suave former Communist, sees on the horizon?

Europe will have "new direction" once Poland joins, he predicts. "A Europe of nations, states with deep co-operation," he says, in terms vague enough to please John Major and, perhaps, Boris Yeltsin, too. And where would its border finally be? Might Russia one day join the European Union and NATO? For now, that would be going a little too far, he said. But, he said: "You never know. This is the building where the Warsaw Pact treaty was signed." He paused and added: "Anything can happen in politics."

The EU and Nato plan to open their doors to up to 12 eastern European members early in the new millennium. For the former communist countries of eastern Europe, early membership of the two organisations has been viewed as an imperative from the day they broke free of Moscow. In Poland, by far the biggest of the would-be members, "Europe" is viewed as a means to achieve stability, to guarantee Poland's statehood and freedom from Russian influence; and to win a stake in a powerful economic alliance. But what else do Poles see when they look to "Europe" and the EU? And has the country's view to the West been blurred by the rise to power of men who once had paid allegiance to the East?

Polish intellectuals who played a key role in the coun-

The political élite believes their country will provide the new motor for the EU, writes Sarah Helm in Warsaw

try's early reforms argue that it is Poland's right to be at the heart of Europe and that right was stripped from it by history. They would have been in at the start if they had had a chance. Once Poland is back where it belongs, they suggest, it will play a central role in European affairs.



Kwasniewski: Poland will give Europe a new direction

To them, it is clear that Europe must be a strong alliance, built on deeply integrated structures. There is talk in Warsaw of forming a new power bloc at the core of Europe, a "Weimar triangle" linking France, Germany and Poland. This political élite appears to believe that the new European "motor", fuelled by Polish energy, might give the EU the new direction it needs.

But this vision is at odds with the EU's own uncertain view of its future and is riddled with contradictions.

"Europe no longer seems clear about what its own model for the future should be," says Piotr Nowina-Konopka, a leading member of the right-wing opposition. "So how can we be clear about where it is going?" Progress in the EU's Inter-Governmental Conference, which is supposed to strengthen the Brussels institutions ready to take new members, has been followed with growing frustration in Warsaw. "There seems to be a slowing down of momentum in the EU. This could be disastrous. If Europe does not enlarge and deepen it will disintegrate. Europe must not become passive, it must not lose its willingness to live and grow in power," says Mr Konopka.

In Warsaw there is also a sense of frustration about Europe's wrangling over issues which to Poles seem irrelevant. "The arguments over issues of consensus and majority voting are details. Great Britain might be worried that the EU means a loss of sovereignty but for us it can only mean a growth in sovereignty," says Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, minister for European integration. Ordinary Poles remark that EU countries now seem too worried about "their own problems".

The failure of both the EU and Nato to give the east Europeans a firm deadline for joining is also causing anxiety.

The fear is that if the EU does not open its doors soon, the willingness of Poles to make the sac-

rifices needed to reform the economy may ebb away.

It is already evident in some sections of Polish society that not everything "Europe" stands for will be good. There have always been Euro-sceptic elements in Poland - in the Catholic Church, for example, and among the farming population, which fears mass unemployment when competition with the West begins to bite.

Privatisation is largely favoured, but questions are asked about the specifics. "Solidarity was the first to launch the liberalising programme," says Marian Krzaklewski, president of Solidarity in Gdansk, where the shipyard faces closure. "But you will hear people ask today whether the only way to attract investment is to sell off our best companies. If they are such promising firms, why don't we keep them ourselves?"

Mr Kwasniewski's post-Communist government appears committed to pushing Poland towards membership of Europe as its predecessor was; it is committed, too, to the required economic and political reforms. The government's future in power is only guaranteed by winning the approval of Western investors.

Adam Michnik, formerly a leading figure in Solidarity and now editor of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poland's biggest selling daily, scoffs at the pro-European pretensions voiced in the presidential palace. "They are all old apparatchiks of the old regime. Now they are in favour of the EU because they prefer to voyage to Paris or Bonn than to Alma Ata or Moscow."



Prosperous Warsaw: The government is committed to economic reforms required for EU membership, but there is anxiety over the lack of a deadline Photograph: Geraint Lewis

Yeltsin softens stance on rebels

PHIL REEVES
Moscow

Boris Yeltsin is planning to see first-hand the small, rebellious Caucasus republic that has done so much damage to his credibility and prospects for re-election. Yesterday he said he planned to go to Chechnya in the middle of the month and was prepared to meet separatist representatives, according to Interfax news agency.

The visit would be his first since he launched the war by sending in troops in December 1994 and appears to be another step in efforts to end the conflict before next month's election. His stance appears to mark a softening of tone: he refused to negotiate directly with the rebel leader, Dzhokhar Dudayev, who was killed on 21 April. Dudayev's successor, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, said he was ready to talk to Moscow's top leaders, without naming the President.

Whether he would seriously negotiate so soon after talking over the leadership remains doubtful, if only because he would risk being accused by fellow Chechens of betraying Dudayev's cause. He has already demanded several conditions, saying talks should be conditional on withdrawal of Russian troops, and have nothing to do with "propaganda acts in the pre-election period".

As the two sides manoeuvred, hostilities continued. Authorities in neighbouring Dagestan said rebels took seven policemen hostage. In Shali, 30 miles from Grozny, the Russians threatened to attack the town unless 300 separatist fighters lay down their weapons and left.

■ Riga - A report for a Russian think-tank calling for a pre-emptive strike against the Baltic states if they got into Nato has caused alarm, Reuters reports. "In such an event, it is impossible to rule out pre-emptive military action by the Russian Federation armed forces against armed nationalist units with the aim of decisive cutting short possible practical steps towards carrying out the implementation of the mentioned provocative plans," the report was quoted as saying.

Barbie's invasion of Russia faces stand from a doll with 'soul'

PHIL REEVES
Moscow

The West has never been in any doubt about their dislike of Nato expansion, or foreign debt, or international criticism of their clapped-out nuclear power stations. But the Russians' latest grievance against their old Cold War foes is of a more personal nature. Their

sensitivities have been offended by a small, blonde, plastic, and utterly Western creation - the Barbie doll.

Russian traditionalists may have grown used to seeing their compatriots queuing by the hundreds to eat a Big Mac, or driving around Moscow's streets in BMWs, or avidly reading *Good Housekeeping*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Penthouse*.

But the esteem in which the nation's small girls hold Barbie is just too much to bear.

At least, it is for Slava Zaitsev, 58, one of the country's leading fashion designers. He has accused the doll of being "absolutely cold, scrawny, cynical and pragmatic". He also thinks that she is unduly sexual (though not sexy). And he plans to supplant her - with a

warm-hearted Russian doll who has that most elusive of Slavic properties: "soul".

That Barbie is hugely popular in Russia is not at issue. You only have to poke your head in the Moscow's huge children's store "Detki Mir" to find Barbie in scuba gear, Barbie at the Oscars, Barbie as a pilot. She is on sale everywhere. You may not be able to find an edible

sandwich or a working lavatory at many Russian airports. But Barbie, in all her cosmetic glory, is certain to be there. So, for that matter, are Ken and Andy.

To find a prototype for his rival doll, Mr Zaitsev - designer of the forbidding black robes worn by Russia's senior judges - staged a competition among 15,000 girls called "Goodbye Barbie. Hello Marusia!". A

panel of designers, toy-makers and artists selected three angelic-looking children, aged between eight and six: Katya, Vika and Anna.

Exactly what the finished product will look like remains to be seen, but if Mr Zaitsev's prescription for a good doll is any guide, it will be more "babushka" than babe, more mother than moron. "It is high

time to think of the creation of our Russia dolls with a Russian soul," he told the *Moskovsky Komsomolets* newspaper. "... it must be chubby and cuddly."

The fashion designer has dreamt up some headline-catching stunts to sell his new toy, such as using two giant balloons to spirit Barbie away from Russian soil. Patriots will, no doubt, applaud.

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international

Olive Tree to prune Berlusconi's empire

ANDREW GUMBEL
Rome

Italy's new centre-left government intends to introduce legislation within the next three months that would force the former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi to sell one of his three private television networks amid a drastic reorganisation of the public broadcasting service.

Walter Veltroni, the deputy leader of the winning Olive Tree coalition, who is tipped to take a leading role in the broadcasting reforms, told the *Independent* that the new government, expected to take office in the next three weeks, wanted to settle the media ownership issue by the summer holidays.

Both Mr Berlusconi's Fininvest empire and the Rai state broadcasting service would be cut back from three network channels to two; lenders would

be put out to new private investors and rules would be drawn up to encourage and regulate cable and satellite programming.

"Nobody will be allowed more than two channels," Mr Veltroni said.

That is what the Constitutional Court has decreed in a ruling which must be respected by August at the latest, and that is what Fininvest and I decided in the agreement we worked out last summer.

The move is likely to be fiercely contested by Mr Berlusconi, who has battled to keep control of his media empire despite his entry into politics and who felt vindicated when he won a series of referendums on media ownership last summer.

A radical reorganisation of Italian broadcasting could interfere with Mr Berlusconi's plans to float his media interests on the Milan stock ex-

change by the end of June. Since the referendums Mr Berlusconi has regrouped his media companies into a new company called Mediaset and has sold roughly 30 per cent to Italian banks and foreign investors.

The chairman of Mr Berlusconi's business empire, Fedele Confalonieri, said earlier this week that he had been assured by the country's leaders that "our firms will not be dismantled", and that the company was a national asset.

But this not a view shared by many financial analysts, who argue that the creation of Mediaset and the ensuing share sell-offs have merely enabled Mr Berlusconi to attract new capital without relinquishing overall control.

Mr Veltroni was confident the new legislation would pass without excessive protest from Mr Berlusconi, who is now leader of the opposition.

"The Constitutional Court ruling would have forced him to lose one channel anyway. It's in his interests to find a solution," Mr Veltroni said.

"We have no intention of starting a witch-bunt or provoking confrontations."

The new government also hopes that Rai, whose programme output has come to resemble Mr Berlusconi's blend of cheesy game-shows, films and imported serials, will return to its original role as a genuine public service.

Mr Veltroni said he hoped the new board of management at Rai, which must be approved by the new parliament, would reintroduce educational and cultural programmes which had been slowly squeezed out over the past 10 years.

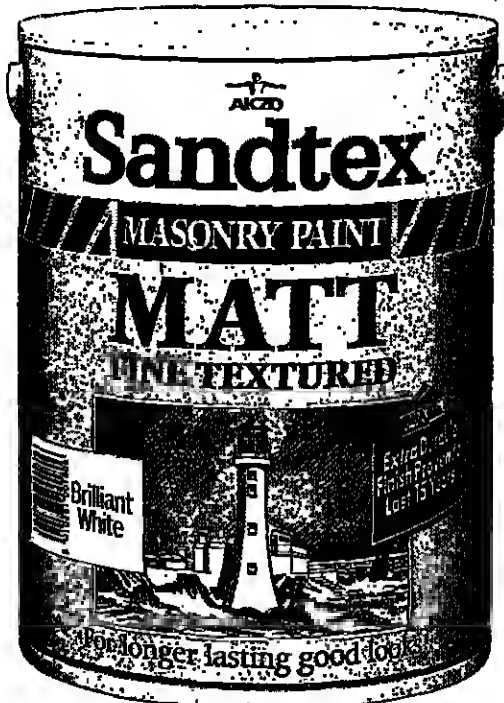
"We want to take the politics out of programming and create a body that promotes quality," he said.



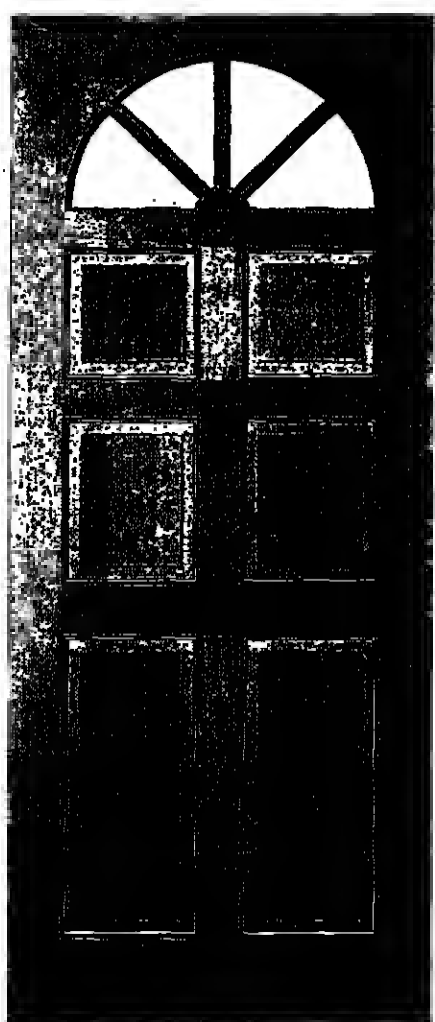
Drought days: Ranchers in Texas herd cattle to market to sell rather than risk a water shortage. Photograph: AP

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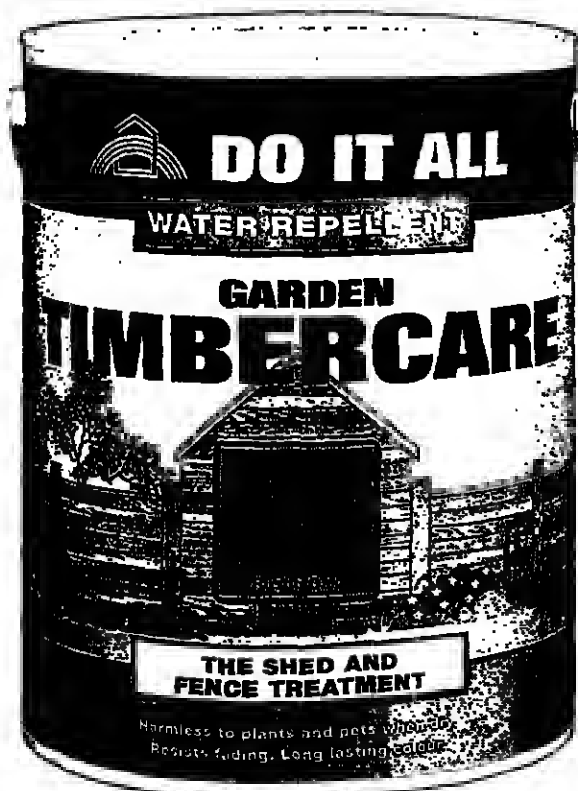
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European arm of Nato seeks a wider reach

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY
Defence Correspondent

The Western European Union – the European arm of Nato – wants to be able to "mount and control peacekeeping, humanitarian aid and crisis management" by the end of the year, Foreign Office officials said yesterday.

Foreign and defence ministers from the 10 full members of the WEU and 17 other European countries will meet at Birmingham's International Convention Centre next week. But although the end of the year coincides with the end of the current mandate for the Nato-led peace implementation force (I-For) in Bosnia, officials said there was absolutely no way the WEU could take on an operation of that magnitude – or even a smaller "post-I-For" operation in Bosnia.

The meeting will hear how, under the British presidency, the WEU has taken "concrete steps" towards being able to conduct operations at the lower levels of conflict.

Diplomatic sources yesterday said this part of the spectrum was ill-defined but believed the WEU would be able to conduct operations more ambitious than those seen so far – for example, the naval blockade in the Adriatic – but still well short of a big military operation like I-For, which involves 60,000 troops.

The "concrete steps" so far include a security agreement between WEU and Nato which will make it possible for classified information to pass between the headquarters of the two organisations. This is seen as vital to enable the WEU to use Nato forces.

A situation centre has been set up at the WEU headquarters in Brussels to control and monitor operations. Sources yesterday said the technology for command, control and communications would all be in place by the end of the year. There has also been an agreement on "strategic airlift" known as Eurolift, to ensure the WEU can get forces to where they are needed.

"It's the kind of thing that has to be got right if the vision we have of European defence policy is to be realised," a Foreign Office official said.

"There may well be tasks in the field of peacekeeping, crisis management and humanitarian operations which are not appropriate for Nato. They will be European but the assets will be drawn from Nato."

The WEU can draw on Nato communications and resources, but without fully involving the Atlantic Alliance. The main means of doing this is to be the Combined Joint Task Force concept. Nato nations are expected to finalise the details of CJTFs at the Nato summit in Berlin on 3 June.

Mongolian fires worsen

IRJA HALASZ
Reuters

Ulan Bator – Mongolian schoolboys joined thousands of soldiers to battle fires whipped up across the steppes by high winds yesterday as one injured teenage firefighter fought for his life in an Ulan Bator hospital.

"This afternoon the winds have been so strong that the fire is spreading in all directions extremely fast," army spokesman Damdinsuren said. "The winds have whipped up such a fierce blaze that the firefighters can do nothing more than try to protect camps and cattle," he said.

The remains of three firefighters had been found in the region's Erdenebatal county, lying near their homes, he said. "Only ashes were left."

Scores of fires have roared across Mongolia's steppes, 250 to 300 miles from the capital, in the past three weeks. The latest deaths raised the toll to 19, with 60 injured. The fires have left 700 people homeless and destroyed about 30,000 square miles of forests and pastureland. About 6,000 cattle, the lifeline of Mongolia's nomadic herders, have been killed.

A total of 5,800 people were trying to hold back seven fires and all the oldest schoolboys had been deployed to join soldiers and locals in combating the blazes, Damdinsuren said. Firefighter Batmunkh, 16, lay in hospital fighting for life after suffering 90 per cent burns as he battled a huge blaze in Batsumbar county, about 40 miles north of the capital.

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acceptance and surgery.
"It was like coming home,"
she said. "When I realised that

Court of Justice today ruled on the
behaviour of the school directors
breached the 1976 Euro-

that the Government would
have to amend legislation.

SUCH AS MARRIAGE
birth certificates and passports.

missioning IRA weapons.

مكتبة من الكتب

The record Hoddie has to beat: how England managers compare

Manager	Career	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Record*	European best	World best	Highs	Lows
Walter Winterbottom	1946-62	139	78	33	28	87.99%	didn't enter	'54 & '62: quarter finals	Quality coach. Insisted on skills training.	Team selections submitted to committee. Lost to US. Disastrous World Cup record
Alf Ramsey	1963-74	113	69	27	17	73.01%	didn't enter	'66: Champions	1966 World Cup Final victory, knighthood followed	Raised expectations. Sacked after failed to make the 1974 World Cup.
Joe Mercer	1974	7	3	3	1	64.29%	76: didn't qualify	'80: second round	Charmmed media	Just a caretaker had little impact
Don Revie	1974-77	29	14	8	7	62.07%	'80: first round	'82: second round	Difficult to identify one really	Fury at his signing contrast to manage Arab Emirates
Ron Greenwood	1977-82	55	33	12	10	70.09%	'88: first round	'90: semi-finals	Oligified, thoughtful, team played good football	Strained early in the World Cup and European championships
Bobby Robson	1982-90	95	47	30	18	65.26%	'92: first round	'94: didn't qualify	Got to the 1990 World Cup semi-finals	Three straight defeats in 1988 Euro championships
Graham Taylor	1990-93	38	18	13	7	64.47%			N/A	Fly-on-the-wall documentary exposed his mediocrity
Terry Venables	1994-96	16	7	8	1	68.75%			Great coach, respected by players	String of legal actions against him over business deals
	1946-96	492	269	134	89	66.99%	'68: third overall	'66: Champions		

*Record based on win=2 points, draw=1 point, loss=0 points. The manager's record equals total points as a percentage of highest possible total points.

Ben Summers and Claire Affie

Say a little prayer

Jim White offers Glenn Hoddie a crash course on the worst job in English football

1. Don't Do What Graham Taylor Did...

...and wear, while pacing the touchline, a tracksuit apparently several sizes too small for you. The way the garish nylon fabric of the Turnip's outfit failed to disguise his ill-disciplined contours was an irresistible metaphor for England under his tutelage: a nation brought low by inadequate tailoring. As a role model for Hoddie, Taylor offers so many lessons. He can learn all he needs to know about his new job by studying whatever Taylor did and doing the opposite.

Taylor was so far out of his depth he needed an aqualung. It was a tale of comic-tragic humiliation, punctuated by pat philosophising and inarticulate rages. "For the record," announced a Channel 4 press notice about *The Impossible Job*, a fly-on-the-wall documentary record of Taylor's reign, "to the film Mr Taylor utter 38 fucks, three craps, two shifts and there is an obscured wanker." Not that Hoddie would ever contemplate allowing flys anywhere near his wall. Contentious at best in his dealings with the media, the new England manager is capable of freezing a reporter's note book at 40 paces. Cozy chats and indiscreet briefings are not his way, the media will be kept at arm's length.

2. Do What Bobby Robson Did...

...and allow senior players in on tactics. Hoddie, in his shrewd corraling of Ruud Gullit's nous at Chelsea, has already proved prepared to listen. Though whether he will ever go as far as Robson in the 1990 World Cup and delegate responsibility for team tactics to his players is unlikely. During that tournament, Robson, dewy-eyed and emotional as always, allowed himself to be persuaded by a clique of senior players that they needed a sweeper system. He let them get on with it and hey presto, get on with it they did. To the semi-final. If only one of the lads had suggested some penalty-taking practice as well.

3. Don't Do What Don Revie Did...

...and treat the players like children. Revie, also known as Don Readies for his partially to a filled brown envelope, believed the England set-up should be one big happy family, a unit in which he cast himself as the father figure. The temptations facing English footballers are many, various and seldom resisted, but making them indulge in carpet bowls, bingo and quiz nights is unlikely to help their preparation. International players do not need to be treated as if they have only recently graduated from nappies. Unless they are Paul Gascoigne.

4. Do What Joe Mercer Did...

...and make them play with a smile on their faces. He was only manager for a couple of months, in the interregnum between Alf Ramsey and Don Revie, but the former Manchester City manager transformed England. "Go out and enjoy yourselves," was the extent of his team talks. The nervous, cowed remnants of the team that had fallen to the clown-like Poles in World Cup qualification suddenly started to look world-beaters, stroking the ball around with abandon. Mind you, it was only against Wales.

5. Don't Do What Ron Greenwood and Bobby Robson Did...

...and play their best player out of position. For 10 years England possessed a midfield playmaker capable of turning a match, a player whose skill would have stopped the traffic in Rio. Greenwood and Robson squandered his talent. In the 53 games he played for England, just once was he used in the role he had at his club, that of a floating, Bond-like, go-anywhere assassin. His name: Glenn Hoddie.

6. Do What Terry Venables Did...

...and stick with your team. Don't be swayed by the press. Given the uncustomed luxury of not having to qualify for a tournament, Venables has spent the lead up to Euro 96 wisely. Spurning the pundits who suggest English players are too stupid to adapt, Venables has developed a

system far more likely to work in international football than the up-and-at-em rush favoured by, for instance, Graham Taylor. Just a shame Matt Le Tissier was never one of his favourites.

7. Don't Do What Terry Venables Did...

...and indulge in a bit of business on the side, fall out with your old club chairman and spend more time in the dock than the Q&A. Don't make your mates in the press members of your night club, and then forget to tell the bloke from the *Mirror* he's invited too. Don't pick agent Eric Hall's clients in your squad, move from the BBC and Des Lynam to ITV and Bob Wilson, appear as the huff of a Walker's crisps commercial, and wear a pepper-and-salt coat that blends seamlessly with your hair.

8. Don't Do What Alf Ramsey, Graham Taylor and Don Revie Did...

...and fail to qualify for the World Cup. Nothing encourages the critics like failure. Part of the job as England manager is contending with some of the most vitriolic abuse known to man. Don Revie was vilified for running away to the desert. Bobby Robson for his philandering. Terry Venables for his financial dealings and Graham Taylor for being Graham Taylor. But the worst abuse they have suffered is after failure, when they are subjected to trial by bad pun: "Desert Prat" Robson was called

after a draw with Saudi Arabia; "Swedes 2 Turnips 1" was the headline after Taylor's England were defeated by Sweden; "Yanks 2 Planks 0" after failure against the Americans.

As a nation we still fondly believe we should be involved at the highest level; we cannot tolerate being left out of the World Cup. The stinging pain of sitting at home during a major tournament, with the television commentators assuming we want to cheer on Scotland or, worse, Ireland, the awful humiliation of seeing Costa Rica quality ahead of us, is not something the average newspaper headline writer forgets in a hurry.

9. Do What Sir Alf Ramsey Did...

...and win

the World Cup. Nothing silences the critics like victory.

10. Do What You Always Do...

...and pray. As the new manager of England you will need all the help you can get.



Taking the dawg's name in vain

Politics, desertion, muckraking, and now courtroom drama - it may be a dog's life, but for the late President Mitterrand's black Labrador, Baltique (below), it's never dull. This morning,



France's favorite pooch finds herself back in the news - at the centre of a Parisian courtroom row, billed "Baltique vs Baltique".

Having ingested at French heartstrings when she followed her master's coffin from the church to the cemetery in January, Baltique was then very publicly dumped by Mitterrand's widow.

Now, the poor dog is caught in a tussle between two publishers - each of which has published a book of salacious pseudo-remembrances about the president's private life. Both books bear a picture of the cuddly hound on the cover - and both purport to be written by "Baltique".

In a fit of pique, the first publisher to poach Baltique's pawprint then announced it was suing the second - claiming copyright on the pseudonym. The case was due in court this morning - but a frantic 11th-hour negotiated settlement looks like keeping both books out of court, and still on sale.

Really, a dog can only take so much. The very suggestion that Baltique - man's best friend, after all - would sell her master's most intimate secrets to some grubby publisher is insulting enough.

But then to have the publisher claim rights to her name, when they had taken it in vain anyway? Baltique,

I am told, is most distressed. I think she should sue.

You're fired. Whoops, no you're not

The new editor Will Hutton may prove to be the golden boy to save the *Observer's* fortunes - but he's certainly going about it a funny way. One of his very first senior appointments, the managing editor, Danny John, has already distinguished himself by sacking several staff - then having to reinstate them promptly, in a farcical case of mistaken identities.

One respected features writer was startled to be called in by Mr John this week, told that, frankly, the boss "didn't rate him", and shown the door. Drowning his shocked sorrows in the local pub,



Don't fret Tara, all the club's coming too

Anything they can do, we Cannes do too

Proof, if one were needed, that the British film industry is back on its feet: we have finally mastered the gluttonous art of the full-on, Hollywood-inspired beano. This morning, the flawlessly fashionable Sobo House, private watering hole for London's movie movers and shakers such as Ewan McGregor and Lara Fitzgerald (above), is packing up and shipping out to Cannes. For the duration of the film festival, owners, staff and members will enjoy the full benefits of their favourite club, relocated on a chartered motor yacht. "We thought," explains the manager, Matthew Hooberman, "we really shouldn't deny our members their usual service, just because they are away in Cannes." Oh, obviously. Such selfishness!

he was even more startled when a blushing representative of the *Guardian's* editor burst in, hauled him out and marched him back to the office. "There's been a bit of a cock-up, old boy," blustered the red-faced editor, cracking open the mini-bar. "Bit of a misunderstanding. So sorry - you're not fired at all." Good news for the hack in question - but not, of course, much reassurance for all the other staff now panicking that the axe was meant for them.

Is nothing sacred?

Chris Patten (right) may still be at the helm, and Hong Kong may not be due to return to the Chinese until next year. But I learn, with great sadness, that the last great bastions of British colonialism have already crumbled. This week, the list of goods and services by which the colony measures its inflation rate was published. It is an enlightening litany, and reveals much about Hong Kong's growing cosmopolitan lifestyle.

"We have access to so many things," enthuses a government spokesman. "We have more choices." Sadly, in this bold new consumer world, it seems no one is choosing the finest features of a great British colonial heritage. Some 42 essential items no longer feature on the list - and they include gin, shrimp paste and ox tongue.

Railtrack, we love you

Railtrack staff must be terribly forgetful. How else can one explain the terse memo to employees in East Anglia, issued in response to Wednesday's less than flattering Channel 4 *Dispatches* portrayal?

"It is never pleasant to be pilloried in this way," huffs the memo, "but you know that we are a professional organisation of highly trained staff competently controlling the railway. It is worth remembering that." Of course it is. Next time I am stranded for hours in a great Railtrack cock-up, that's precisely I'm sure - what I'll remember.

Island life

As bad luck, bad taste and bad timing go, a full-page travel ad in one of the colour supplements last Sunday took some beating. Under the headline "Tasmania's", it read: "This treasure island has far more to offer than the notorious Tasmanian Devil. Shame really it's all most people associate with the place."

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THE INDEPENDENT

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Mr Howard is playing with fire

It hardly even counts as news: "Courts overrule Howard - again." We have heard this story so many times before. Rarely a month passes without Michael Howard the Home Secretary being found by the judiciary to have abused his powers. In March the immigration board told him he couldn't exile the Saudi dissident Al-Mas'ari to Dominica. In February, the European Court of Human Rights said independent review boards - and not the Home Secretary - should decide whether a young killer is safe to be released once his minimum sentence has been served. In September he was found guilty of injustice over parole applications by IRA prisoners. The list goes on and on.

Yet even in this long list Mr Howard's clash with the judges over the sentences for the killer of little James Bulger was bound to be special. The High Court ruled yesterday that the Home Secretary was wrong to set a minimum sentence of 15 years for the two children convicted of murdering James three years ago. It isn't hard to see how an injustice could be done. Richard Thompson and Jun Venables were only 10 years old when they killed the two-year-old James. The trial judge detained them "at Her Majesty's pleasure" and recommended that they serve at least eight years. The Lord Chief Justice hid the minimum sentence up to 10 years. Higher, higher, hollered the crowd; 300,000 people signed a petition and 20,000 *Sunday* readers sent the Home Secretary coupons demanding longer sentences for the boys. Ever ready to please his public, Mr Howard settled on 15.

When politicians get their hands on cases that hit the headlines, it is hard for justice to be done. However, the judges are not - yet - arguing that the Home Secretary should mind his own business entirely. Last December they upheld his right to set minimum sentences for adults who are convicted of murder.

The injustice for the Bulger boys, according to the High Court, was not so much that a politician had intervened, it was the fact that he had treated them as adults rather than children. Until now children and teenagers who kill - like convicted adult murderers - have been given recommended minimum sentences. But children who kill should have their cases continually reviewed as their personalities develop and mature - something which was inconsistent with a 15-year minimum sentence. Fifteen years constitutes about a quarter of a typical adult life. But it is an entire childhood.

Mr Howard responded to the ruling yesterday by summoning the will of Parliament, as well as the passions of the public, to his defence. He was, he claimed, simply using the powers Parliament had given him, just as Home Secretaries had in 400 other cases since 1983. Perhaps. But the broadest and most unreasonable powers may go unchallenged until they are abused. The Home Secretary seems to enjoy deliberately provoking liberal opinion and playing games with justice for political ends. Such an approach might work in the short-run but in the long run it will only further tarnish the Tories' damaged reputation.

Whose genes are we exploiting?

Twins are becoming big business. They are being studied by economists who are trying to work out how much influence education has upon employment prospects. Psychologists find them indispensable in the study of mental disorders such as schizophrenia. But where they are most useful and most lucrative is in the rapidly expanding industry of genetics.

The genes of identical twins are the resource base for the most effective studies designed to isolate nature from nurture, genetic influences from environmental factors. Yesterday more than a thousand twins gathered for a party hosted by doctors researching the genetic causes of a range of chronic diseases. The researchers are aiming for 5,000 participants. This could be a hugely valuable data bank.

Identical twins share 100 per cent of their genes. If they live apart it should be possible to work out whether any illnesses they suffer are the result of their lifestyles or their genetic inheritance. This in turn should help to develop cures.

The savings to the health service could be huge. Already researchers at St Thomas's hospital in London have identified genetic factors which might make women's bones more brittle in middle age, a condition known as osteoporosis. Two million people in the UK 50 per cent of their women suffer from osteoporosis. One in three women and one in 12 men have a fracture by the age of 70. The annual cost of the disease to the health service is estimated at £750m.

The St Thomas's team wants to move on to study obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure and asthma. So the potential health benefits of this data bank may be vast. But so too might be the profits of the genetic companies which exploit the research.

The rights to one gene that is thought to influence obesity were sold last year for \$70m. The value of the St Thomas's data bank could run to hundreds of millions of pounds. The rights to exploit the data bank have been sold to a company called Genial International, whose headquarters are in the British Virgin Islands.

To free-market the exploitation of such a genetic data bank might not pose any troubling questions. Private-sector companies are taking a risk by investing in the research; they should reap the rewards. But this research is not quite like other pharmaceutical research. Human beings are not just being used to test drugs; their living matter is being developed to help drugs. The ownership of the treatments developed by genetic research is hugely controversial.

But this is no simple story of private-sector exploitation, far from it. The St Thomas's team turned to private investment because they had to; public-sector grants had dried up. Several leading geneticists have left Britain in the past year because there is not enough money to fund their research; private finance is the only way to get their results into the international marketplace.

The issue of who owns the rights to genetic discoveries will not go away; it will become more pressing. A review of British legislation would be helpful but only up to a point: this is an international issue. Rulings by the International Court of Justice, the European Patent Convention or indeed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade are needed to help clear it up before the "gene prospectors" give the industry a bad name.



The morning after

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

No justification for sheep slaughter

Sir: Paul Field's excellent article (29 April) on the disgusting treatment of sheep in the French ritual slaughter last weekend revealed horrors that should have no place in a civilised society. In June 1995, I wrote to the Minister of Agriculture about last year's almost identical slaughter. The reply I received from the Ministry of Agriculture was predictably complacent:

The French authorities have told us that special arrangements were made for field slaughter, under veterinary supervision, to meet the demands of the Muslim community. The French authorities work closely with Muslim organisations and welfare organisations throughout the year to improve standards of slaughtering and to control this activity... Provided that proper welfare standards are in place, there is no reason why animals should not be transported to France... The Minister does not think that there has been any suggestion that the sheep's welfare has been adversely affected during their journey to France.

It is hard to relate the scenes in the "killing fields" to "proper welfare standards", just as it is difficult to imagine worse "standards of slaughtering" than those described in your article.

When we see evidence of such blatant and cruel defiance of EU animal welfare legislation, what confidence can any thinking person have in the sham welfare regulations in the EU or the claims of this government to take animal welfare issues seriously?

Live exports should be banned, and strenuous and committed efforts be made to ensure that all sentient beings are treated with the humanity they deserve.

Dr AMANDA VANCE
West Chiltington,
West Sussex

Sir: There is little theological justification for Muslims all over the world to sacrifice sheep at the time of the *hajj* in Mecca (report, 29 April). The Holy Koran only says: "Accomplish the Pilgrimage... but if you are hindered then make whatever offering is easy..." (2:196). When the Prophet of Islam made the sacrifice in Medina, it was because he was physically prevented by his enemies from making the Pilgrimage.

Some time ago, the Saudi Arabian government stopped pilgrims from making their own sacrifice. Instead they owe give money to pay for sheep to be killed, butchered and frozen in a processing plant near Mecca, and for the meat to be sent to poor countries. The logical next step will be for the pilgrims' money to be used to pay for food aid to these same countries. That would put an end to the suffering of hundreds of thousands of Australasian sheep currently transported across the Indian Ocean each year to die in Arabia.

Now that the pilgrims in Mecca no longer sacrifice sheep with their own hands, it seems only a matter of time before Muslims elsewhere cease to be expected to do so.

P J STEWART
Oxford

Sir: The row between English Heritage and the Friends of Kenwood over the future care given to the magnificent Iveagh Bequest art collection, something of international worth, raises issues that ought not to be ignored.

One is the centralisation of local government in the past decade and the unaccountability of some quangos, which, much as they may wish to respond to local feelings, have inevitably to obey the financial imperatives of Whitehall and reduce facilities and services. In the case of Kenwood and the other historic London houses, this directly follows the abolition of the GLC, which, for all its faults, was a democratically elected authority involved in London's strategic future.

We currently have other controversies into which Londoners ought to have a positive input, not just a negative protest. One, for example, is CrossRail, something of vast importance, which has again been put on the shelf. Another is the proposal for a giant Ferris wheel on the South Bank, to celebrate the millennium, the planning decision on which will be taken by a single local council, not London as a whole. Indeed, the only way that Londoners seem to be able to express their desires is by supporting the City Corporation, which, as it has done on historic occasions in the past, now apparently proposes to defy the Government over the closure of St Bart's Hospital and reopen it on a charitable basis. Perhaps we are heading back to the medieval city state.

But this is no sensible way to run the metropolis. No wonder the arguments for the revival of an all-London authority, and the election of a Mayor for London, are belatedly gaining ground.

GERALD ISAACMAN
London WC2

London: a medieval city state

Sir: I was not surprised to read that Arthur Scargill is still committed politically to ideals that were around 100 years ago ("Why Britain now needs a Socialist Labour Party", 2 May). The same could be said of his industrial policy. What he fails to recognise is setting up the Socialist Labour Party is that the conditions that people live and work in, and their aspirations, have changed dramatically while his beliefs have not. His policy to eradicate unemployment by "introducing a four-day working week with no loss of pay, banning all non-essential overtime, and introducing voluntary retirement on full pay at the age of 55" is a demandism without common sense.

It may well be right to describe the billions of pounds a year that we pay out on unemployment as economic insanity but no more so than Mr Scargill's demandism. His accusation that new Labour is in the process of abandoning the principle of universal pension provision is not true but we do have to recognise that many people at work pay into pension schemes, public or private, as I did when I worked in the coal-mining industry.

Mr Scargill and anybody who becomes one of his groupies will have to recognise that they are doing as much of a service to the Conservative Party as many other leaders of factions have done throughout the years by splitting the left-of-centre votes. However, I have to say his defection has pleased far more people in the Labour Party than it has disappointed.

I doubt very much whether Mr Scargill's political platform would be accepted anywhere in the world. His defence of his candidate's poor showing in the Hemsforth by-election is that her vote was only 1 per cent behind the Liberal Democrat's vote. What Mr Scargill failed to recognise was that it was 67 per cent behind new Labour's candidate, and long may it remain so.

KEVIN BARRON MP
(Rother Valley, Lab)
House of Commons

Sir: A sentence was omitted from the letter that you published from me yesterday, which may have left some ambiguity. I would like to make clear that there is no substance to the suggestion that I am a political mentor to Mohamed al-Fayed or that I have been involved in any plans to create a new political party.

FAY RIDLEY
Luton,
Bedfordshire

Sir: Mohamed al-Fayed's plans to form his own political party caused me some amusement. Most people will probably view him as a silly little rich boy who took his ball away because he was not allowed to win the game. I am surprised at the Conservative Party's inept handling of such figures as Mr Fayed and Sir James Goldsmith.

If the very people the party is supposed to represent - the super-rich - feel the necessity to form their own political parties, then something is very seriously amiss with the party's public relations.

LORD LESTER QC
London WC2

Sir: Michael Mears (Letters, 1 May) accuses his adversaries in the Law Society of feeding in grievances, not achievements. I do not know why he finds that strange. They are lawyers, after all.

RICHARD MANN
Oxford

Sir: I am sorry to hear that the letter that you published from me yesterday, which may have left some ambiguity. I would like to make clear that there is no substance to the suggestion that I am a political mentor to Mohamed al-Fayed or that I have been involved in any plans to create a new political party.

FRED CANTER
Uckfield,
East Sussex

Sir: May I correct Abdul Rashid's letter (1 May)? The American-Jewish doctor committed his murders in Hebron mosque, not Jerusalem, and the number of those killed was 29. He now has a large memorial to his exploits in the same town.

MICHAEL TEARLE
Cardiff

Sir: A sentence was omitted from the letter that you published from me yesterday, which may have left some ambiguity. I would like to make clear that there is no substance to the suggestion that I am a political mentor to Mohamed al-Fayed or that I have been involved in any plans to create a new political party.

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FAY RIDLEY
Luton,
Bedfordshire

'Major had a little Hogg', and other verse

Many people have expressed interest in the discovery by my friend "Cocker" Leakey, the working-class anthropologist, that children in today's playgrounds are writing cursory rhymes with a political slant. They have asked me to ask him if there were any more where the last line came from. So I did.

"More?" said Cocker, as we reclined over a pint of foaming best ale in the paleontology pub, the Skull and Trowel. "I should say so. As much as you like. I mean, I showed you my Jeffrey Archer stuff last time, but there's just as much about Michael Howard. Try this one first starters."

He pulled this out of a pocket full of scraps of paper.

Michael Howard
Cloward, Cloward
Built lots and lots of jails
But figures for crime
Went up all the time
And that's how prison fails!
"Like it?" said Cocker. "Here's another."

Michael Howard went to court
For making laws he didn't ought.
Michael Howard, the judges said,
Should stand in the corner and hang
his head.
Michael Howard shouted: "Fat chance!
I will lead you a merry dance!"



MILES KINGSTON

Prison works! I'm God! Ole!
So the men in the white coats took him away.
"Are all the rhymes about the Government?" I asked him. "Nothing about new Labour?"

"Not that many," said Cocker, "but I've found a few. Here's one modelled on Simple Simon..."

Harriet Harman
Met a burman
Out walking with her daughter
Said Harriet Harman to the burman
"Give her a glass of water!"
Said she, "Oh no,
And will it be
Tap water from the mains?
Or would you prefer
Something more dear
Distilled from Scottish rains?"
Said she, "Oh no,
My H-J
Must always come from the tap.
If I should dare

To go private, then Blair
Would surely give me a slap!"
"Actually," said Cocker, "I think nursery rhymes are like satire - it's always a damn sight easier to write about people in office. But this one's not bad."

Johnny, Johnny Prescott
Said, "Oh, look at me!
I've gone middle class now
I've joined the bourgeoisie!"
Then the middle classes
Said to him: "You what?
You may think you're middle class
But you're bloody not!"
"Funny thing is," said Cocker, as he signalled to the barman for another round, "Major and Blair are both so colourless that you don't find many rhymes about either. I've actually found more about Cherie than Tony Blair. Cherie, Cherie, Quite contrary. Which way will you vote? Militant? Old Socialist? Or won't you rock the boat?"

"Not great," I said.
"You don't go in nursery rhymes for greatness, my old elitist mate," said Cocker. "You go for immediacy. Try this."

Major had a little Hogg
For unanimity.
Whatever Mr Major said,
The Hogg said, "I agree!"
Mr Major kept his Hogg

Clean and free from fleas
Said Mr Major, "You mustn't catch Any mad Hogg disease!"
So when the people saw the Hogg
Out of the bushes climb,
They shouted out, with one accord,
"Look out! It's Hoggwash time!"
"Quite like that one," said Cocker. "But not as much as this one..."

Michael Michael
Heseltine
Said, "One day
This will all be mine!"
Waited around
For ages and ages
Then said: "Well, maybe
It will all be Major's."

"Are all these rhymes about the famous people?" I asked.
"Not necessarily. I've got one about Juliaa Critchley somewhere. Yes, here it is..."

Juliana Critchley loved to joke
So he wasn't Margaret's sort of bloke
Juliana Critchley was never a peer
Major thought it a bad idea.
Juliana Critchley was like you and me.
So why did he ever become an MP?
"That's enough to be going on with," I said, but as I left I distinctly heard him singing:

"Virginia Bottomley
Was very comely.
Wasn't she lucky
Her name wasn't Bumley?"

acceptance and surgery.
"It was like coming home," she said. "When I realised that

Court of Justice found the behaviour of the school directors breached the 1976 Euro-

that the Government would have to amend legislation.

such as marriage, birth certificates and passports.

missioning IRA weapons.

missioning IRA weapons.

missioning IRA weapons.

missioning IRA weapons.

comment

Watch Atlanta win the jobs race

The Olympics, like everything else in the city, have been planned with commerce in mind

We are going to hear a lot more about Atlanta in the next few weeks: indeed by the time the Olympics are through we may feel we know rather more than we want to about the place. If so, that would be a pity, for a visit there earlier this week has convinced me that other cities around the world have a great deal to learn from Atlanta.

At the moment, all seems chaos. The Olympic Park in the city centre, which will be the focal point of the celebrations, is a sea of mud and bulldozers. Shopfitters are working 18 hours a day to finish the new shops at the airport. But construction being what it is, you would expect a last-minute scramble and there is no reason to doubt that come July the place will be ready. Atlanta is accustomed to growth.

On the simple measure of job creation, it is the most successful city in the US. Other cities can probably learn something useful from the way it has handled the games, but they can learn something even more useful if they can understand how the city has been so successful in creating permanent employment.

The job numbers are stunning. The city - or rather the metropolitan district, for the city centre has a population of only 400,000 while the district is now 3.7 million - has been creating between 40,000 and 100,000 net new jobs a year since the beginning of the 1990s: more than half a million jobs in the past decade. It is creating jobs faster than much bigger cities, like

Chicago. So the Olympic Games will hit an economy that is already growing very fast.

This is crucial to understanding the likely impact of the games on the economy. Hosting the Olympics can be anything from an economic catastrophe, loading future generations with unpaid debts (Montreal), to giving a solid boost (Barcelona), or perhaps not having any notable effect either way (Los Angeles). The trick is not just to make the games pay in themselves, but rather to use them to stimulate more lasting growth. Atlanta has almost certainly succeeded in the first, but achieving the second goal matters more.

There were two principles behind the Olympic strategy. The first was to use existing facilities wherever possible, as Los Angeles did. So to create the Olympic Village, they took over two-thirds of the campus of Georgia Tech, the technical college a couple of miles from the city centre. Soccer, softball, handball, judo, gymnastics and some other sports all use existing facilities at Georgia Tech, Georgia State University, or other venues around the country.

This self-evidently cuts the costs, but it does not leave a legacy of new facilities. So the second principle was, when building anew, only to build for use after the games. If the permanent need were different from the temporary one, they built for the former, then adapted it for the latter.

The best example of this is the new stadium. It will be used by the Atlanta



HAMISH McRAE

The city is driving pro-business and has been for 30 years

Braves. But they only wanted a 40,000-seater, while the Olympics need 80,000 seats. So the stadium has been designed for the baseball team's needs in the newly fashionable "retro" style, but for the Olympics it will have the extra capacity, which will subsequently be ripped out. Another example is the aquatic facilities, which will be used by the Tec and will have 4,000 seats; but capacity will be more than doubled for the games by adding temporary seats.

The location is not ideal and there will be traffic jams but that is surely better than building the ideal pools for the games and then having them in the wrong place ever after.

The finances? The Olympic committee is spending \$1.7bn, and it has said it will not make a loss, though it is not forecasting a profit. Presumably, on a narrow accounting, the sums will

show some kind of modest plus. From the point of view of the local economy, however, there will be a considerable profit because of the additional money brought into the state.

The most thorough study of that, *The Economic Impact on the State of Georgia of Hosting the 1996 Olympic Games*, by Jeffrey Humphreys and Michael Plummer, puts a \$5.1bn ticket on the whole event. That is made up of \$2.6bn of direct and indirect spending and a further \$2.5bn of spending by visitors from 1991 through to 1997.

Beyond even that is the visibility Atlanta will attract from worldwide, wall-to-wall TV coverage for 17 days. That is very hard to quantify. If things go well, it is likely at the margin to attract more inward investment into the state: Georgia already is second only to California in the number of Japanese companies established there.

I suspect that, when the dust settles, there will be some net economic gains over and above the new facilities that will have been built. But since the city is doing so well anyway, all that will have happened is that it will have grown a bit faster than it otherwise would have done. Several residents I met talked of the games "putting Atlanta on the map". But if you are the headquarters of Coca-Cola and CNN, and have people like Whitney Houston and Elton John living there (Mick Jagger also has a pad), you are pretty much on the map already.

Indeed from the point of view of economic strategy, the most interesting thing about the Atlanta region is

the breadth of the base. It has got itself into a string of growing sectors and has no "smoke-stack" legacy. Having soft drinks and media is a good start. Being a centre for sports personalities is immensely helpful. Atlanta is the new hot city for the record industry. It has the second busiest airport in the world (after O'Hare in Chicago - Heathrow is only the busiest for international passengers). But it also has midsized manufacturers, many from abroad, attracted by the general pro-business climate.

And that is the key to understanding Atlanta. It is determined, drivingly pro-business and it has been for the past 30 years. The Olympics is driven by business. Tax and spending policies are driven by business. Even policies on race are driven by business as captured in the slogan "The city too busy to hate". Atlanta has made a determined effort to curb racial tensions and has probably managed these less badly than any other large US city.

Inevitably there will be costs in the rapid growth that this business-first attitude has created. The building boom has meant that Atlanta is a bit island in an already hot state. There are problems with sewage. There is a lot of concern about the quality of the public schools. Crime is high.

But if you want jobs, this is how to get them. As you watch the Olympics, remember you are watching one very visible example of how the US city most strongly driven by business interests goes about ... its business.

Bad children can get better

The court ruling against Michael Howard in the Bulger case is a victory for justice, argues Allan Levy

The High Court ruling yesterday against Michael Howard's decision to set a 15-year minimum term to be served by the boys who killed Jamie Bulger in 1993 was a victory for those advocating that children should not be treated as adults.

The judgment firmly recognises that special considerations apply to the children in the criminal justice system. This is so even if they have been responsible for appalling criminal acts.

In particular the judges ruled that the sentence given to Jon Venables and Robert Thompson, detention during Her Majesty's Pleasure, must not be equated with mandatory life imprisonment given to an adult convicted of murder. The court said that it could not accept that in the case of an offender aged 10 or 11 the Home Secretary was permitted to fix a tariff of 15 years at the outset, as if the offender were an adult.

This approach is entirely consistent with the Government's international obligations to consider the special position of the child under, for instance, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and, by analogy with the civil as opposed to criminal sphere, the principles set out in the much heralded Children Act of 1989. Indeed, the court's decision rationalises what has been seen by many commentators as an inherent contradiction in the Government's fundamental approach to children and young people. The duty of the Home Secretary, as laid down by the court, is to keep an open mind in respect of the future detention of children who have received an indeterminate sentence and to keep under review the whole question of the length of the loss of liberty.

The court emphasised that any review is entitled to encompass a punishment and deterrence element, together with the risk to the public and public confidence. The age of the offender was clearly an important factor, as the Home Secretary recognised when making his flawed decision. However, the mental and physical changes that will inevitably occur in any child of 10 or 11 must be central to any decision. The different considerations regarding the child as opposed to the adult can also be seen in the question of the effect of deterrence, which raises different questions in the case of a very young offender from those in the case of an adult.

The point was made that

there is nothing new in having regular reviews of detention for children. The court was shown instructions given to prison governors as long ago as 1949. These called for reports 12 months after the sentence was passed and then at yearly intervals. This is, of course, inconsistent with an approach of fixing a long term at the outset of the sentence with a first review only three years before the minimum period of detention ends.

The approach of the court is surely reasonable and understandable and what Parliament clearly intended in its legislation going back to 1908, when it abolished the death penalty for children and emphasised

The likely effect is that the system of setting a tariff will fall into disuse

the importance of rehabilitative and preventive aspects. As the recent Justice report on children and homicide noted, there is extensive research evidence to demonstrate that important developmental changes continue through the teenage years. There is more self-awareness and self-reflection; additionally, during adolescence, there is a greater tendency to think back with regret and to look ahead with apprehension. Young people become increasingly able to consider the long-term consequences of their actions and tend to think about such consequences more in terms of their own sense of responsibility and a better awareness of the effects of their actions on other people. All these factors point towards continual assessment and evaluation.

It is likely that the effect of the court's ruling is that the system of setting a tariff will fall into disuse, but the court has left it to the Home Secretary to devise new procedures. But his involvement may become academic if the application to Strasbourg on behalf of Jon Venables and Robert Thompson, due to be heard in September, is successful. The outcome may well bring to an end the Home Secretary's role and leave matters where many think they rightly belong: in the hands of the independent judiciary.

The writer is a QC specialising in child law.

Are you ready to downshift?

Downsizing is the spectre that haunts Britain. But there is a new alternative to sweeping job cuts, argues Stephen Bevan

We are experiencing a revolution in the workplace. Delaying, downsizing, redundancies, cutbacks - all have left companies heading for corporate success. The few employees left behind are over-worked and discontented, fearful for their jobs. They feel little love for employers: survivors wonder when will the reaper take them out. Just when everyone needs to pull together, when loyalty is at a premium, employees are disgruntled, angry and looking to leave.

In short, large companies are heading for big trouble unless they move fast. They are reducing their staffing to a core upon which, ironically, they are far more dependent than ever before. Yet that core has less reason than ever before to remain loyal.

Nowhere is this dilemma more true than in banking, where competition and electronic technology means that thousands of jobs are being shed and will continue to be lost for the next decade. Branches that once teemed with clerks and tellers are empty shells where a few people keep the machines running and provide a human face. Yet just as the revolution has moved into its bloodiest phase, salvation seems to have appeared. This week, National Westminster Bank announced plans to cut the equivalent of 15,000 jobs, nearly a third of its staff. These days, that's barely news. The real surprise is that the bank proposes to make the cutbacks not by mass compulsory redundancies, but by work-sharing among employees. That means four-day weeks and part-time working for thousands of workers. Not redundancy, but less working.

It sounds like a publicity stunt, a big profit-chasing company suffering a temporary attack of conscience: it is hard for banks, busy celebrating bumper profits, to announce that they are sending thousands of loyal employees on to the dole queue. Here, it seems, is a way to appease bitter staff who have their noses pressed to the window as shareholders feast.

Perhaps. But cynics should take a second look at what NatWest is



Art of living: 'downshifting' - working part time - would give fathers the chance to spend more time with their children

Tony Buckingham

proposing. The bank's cost-saving measures could in fact be the pattern of the future, the blueprint of how big companies will cut their costs, while at the same time preserving some sense of stability, loyalty and well-being among their employees. It may well be that the brutal days of simple downsizing are numbered, and that the smart company of the future will instead opt for "downshifting", reducing the hours their employees work.

This trend is already becoming established in the United States. The Lincoln Electric Company, for example, recently promised employees with more than three years' service that they would not be laid off through lack of work. This dispensation has required some short-time working and a reallocation of work. But it is based on the belief that "relief from anxiety over job security frees people to do their best work". In California, New United Motor Manufacturing (NUMMI), a Toyota-General Motors joint venture, has guaranteed job security in return for a reduction in the number of job layers and for more flexible working practices. This has resulted in increased trust between management and work-

force. And "trust", as Francis Fukuyama, the American commentator, argues in his latest bestseller, is the glue that holds together organisations which may in a short space of time see rapid changes in their employees, their consumers and their share ownership.

It is clear that companies such as NatWest have clearly recognised that (leaving aside issues of ethics, public relations and a new industrial relations agenda, all of which are important) it makes sound business sense to take radical steps to make the changes necessary in their business to build up trust, motivation and confidence in their remaining employees.

Such a view of enlightened self-interest in other companies might well be welcomed by many employees. There is a growing voice in favour of a more forgiving workplace that can allow people to give their non-working lives more of a priority. Men - particularly fathers - have joined the chorus of complaint against the ever-longer working hours that seem to be the price of career advancement or of being able simply to stand still and avoid redundancy. One telling statistic is that a third of fathers of young children work more

than 50 hours a week. Downshifting also offers opportunities to groups to whom the workplace has been inflexible. Women returning to employment, people with caring responsibilities for children or elderly relatives, older workers and people with disabilities might all benefit from a move away from the traditional model of full-time work, which conventional downsizing has tended to reassert. So, if NatWest blazed a trail for other companies to follow, it might receive the thanks of more than just its own staff.

But a sceptical eye should be cast upon moves to worksharing and the redistribution principle. It will be less welcome among those who actually need a full-time salary and for those who regard having a full-time job as critical to their psychological well-being and self-esteem. Reductions in working time, without a concomitant increase in feelings of job security, might do little for individual confidence or a consumer-led recovery.

The biggest question mark against seeing downshifting as the nirvana, the long-awaited humanising of inevitable cost-cutting, springs from the fact it is driven by business imperatives rather

than the desires of the workforce. The practice may make sense in the short run to companies such as NatWest that cannot afford to restructure their structures with the scale of job cuts which the economies of their industry demand. But in the longer term, they may think that they have little choice other than to cut their workforce and consolidate the company around a much smaller staff. If this is the long-term outcome, and staff recognise it as such, then downshifting will soon be rumoured as a con, a device cynically used to manipulate employees to the company's advantage without offering them any long-term security. Such a result will do little to establish that rare and fast-disappearing glue - trust and loyalty - that is now needed more than ever to help companies through rocky and uncertain times ahead.

NatWest may be pioneering a bold, imaginative way forward. But the bank may still have a lot to prove to employees whom the Nineties has turned into cynics.

The writer is associate director of the Institute for Employment Studies at the University of Sussex.

So, you wanted to be a local councillor ...

I suspect that few of the thousand or so newly elected councillors will wake up this morning really knowing quite what they have taken on. When I became a councillor in the Isle of Dogs in Tower Hamlets two years ago, it was days before the sheer relief of defeating the British National Party began to wear off. All week letters and cards arrived, many of them from places I'd never visited. The Liberal mayor of one spa town sent me a card saying simply: "Greetings from one Town Hall to another."

But don't expect your euphoria to last for long. You might find a nasty surprise waiting for you. One day after the election, we found out that the previous administration had already sold off our borough's historic town hall. No matter how much former coun-

Yesterday's winners face nightly meetings, crank calls, the odd bouquet among the brickbats. Stephen Molyneux has some tips

cillors have tried to dissuade you from standing for the council, nothing can prepare you for the scale of the task you have taken upon yourself. When I was told it would mean going to meetings every night of the week, I thought this was an exaggeration. Little did I know that I would find myself trying to go to two, three or more meetings a night and still end up feeling guilty about the one I'd missed.

By becoming a public figure whose address and phone numbers are openly available for inspection, you find your home life subjected to some unbelievable intrusions. Although I've

discovered how to deal with the odd telephone call from drunk British National Party members, it is harder to know what to say to some lonely old lady whose entire social life appears to consist of ringing up councillors at two o'clock in the morning. If the Town Hall offers to lend you an answering machine, you'd be wise to accept.

People imagine that councillors get paid for all this, and it is true we all get attendance allowances for committee and council meetings. Yet receiving £22.50 for a day off work or an evening's work is hardly adequate remuneration for the toll that coun-

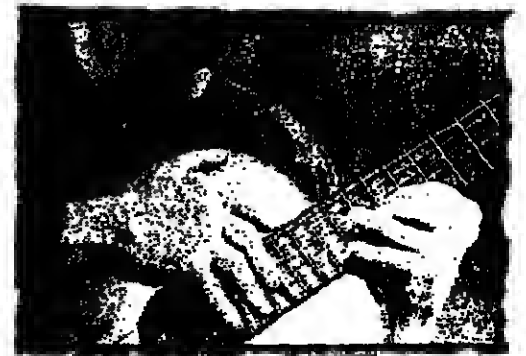
cil duties can impose on your professional and domestic life.

The rewards of being a councillor are to be found elsewhere. When you are stopped on your way round the supermarket and thanked for helping a family to rearrange their debts before a loan shark called round or the bailiffs turned up, you know why you carry on. Opening a new children's playground or a primary school in your ward can be equally rewarding as you see dry committee minutes translated into facilities that are managed and used by the local community.

If I could send one message to everyone who was elected last night, it would be to enjoy your hard-won victory and the service you give to your borough, but try to set aside one night of the week for those near to you. Remember also that most hard-working councillors are quickly forgotten when they come off the council, even if their council's achievements and failures remain visible for decades. While it lasts, however, local politics can be fun, frustrating and bloody hard work. Good luck with the task that you have let yourself in for - there are plenty of surprises and another round of elections awaiting you in four years' time.

The writer is a Labour councillor for the Millwall ward of Tower Hamlets, in east London.

THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED...



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obituaries/gazette

Lord Houghton of Sowerby

On the death of Hugh Galskell in January 1963, Harold Wilson, then Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, was elected Leader of the Labour Party and in his place came Douglas Houghton. I was fascinated, as the newest member of the committee, by the genuine respect Houghton elicited from the civil service knights and dames (Mary Smiley and Evelyn Sharp), according to him not simply as PAC chairman but on account of what the mandarins knew of his past. For some of them, Houghton had been a veritable institution of their own profession for over 40 years; for all the accounting officers of the 1960s, he was *quelqu'un* and far more than simply another politician. Houghton was the pioneer/creator of civil service trade unionism.

In his 1987 autobiography *Time and Chance*, James Callaghan observes that the measure of Houghton's leadership was that he gained the lifelong loyalty and admiration of the membership. "His contemporaries have cherished him all his life as an outstanding leader, who forged their union for them, and achieved conditions they could not have won without him."

Over an outstanding span of 38 years, from 1922 to 1960, Houghton was General Secretary of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation, which started life as the Association of Officers in Tax Offices (AOTO). This small, but remarkable, trade union managed to attract a 95 percent voluntary membership without the benefit of a closed shop; and despite the fact that its 10,000 members were scattered in 600 separate towns and offices the length and breadth of Britain. In the informed judgement of Lord Callaghan of Cardiff, who was at the age of 21 elected to the NEC of the union, "This was mainly due to the vigour and organisational ability of the General Secretary, Douglas Houghton, who was then a young man in his early thirties."

Houghton was an inspirational innovator, and continued to think constructively until his mid-nineties, as those of us who talked to him, padding around Westminster, can testify. One of Houghton's inspirations was to fill the gap left by the failure of the Board of Inland Revenue to provide new recruits with any systematic instruction. He decided that a course should be prepared to enable newcomers to pass the qualifying examination for promotion, and with the voluntary aid of other members of the union, a course of tuition covering the syllabus was devised. Houghton then submitted the proposed course to the Inland Revenue Department; he received their informal blessing though they did not officially recommend it to new recruits.

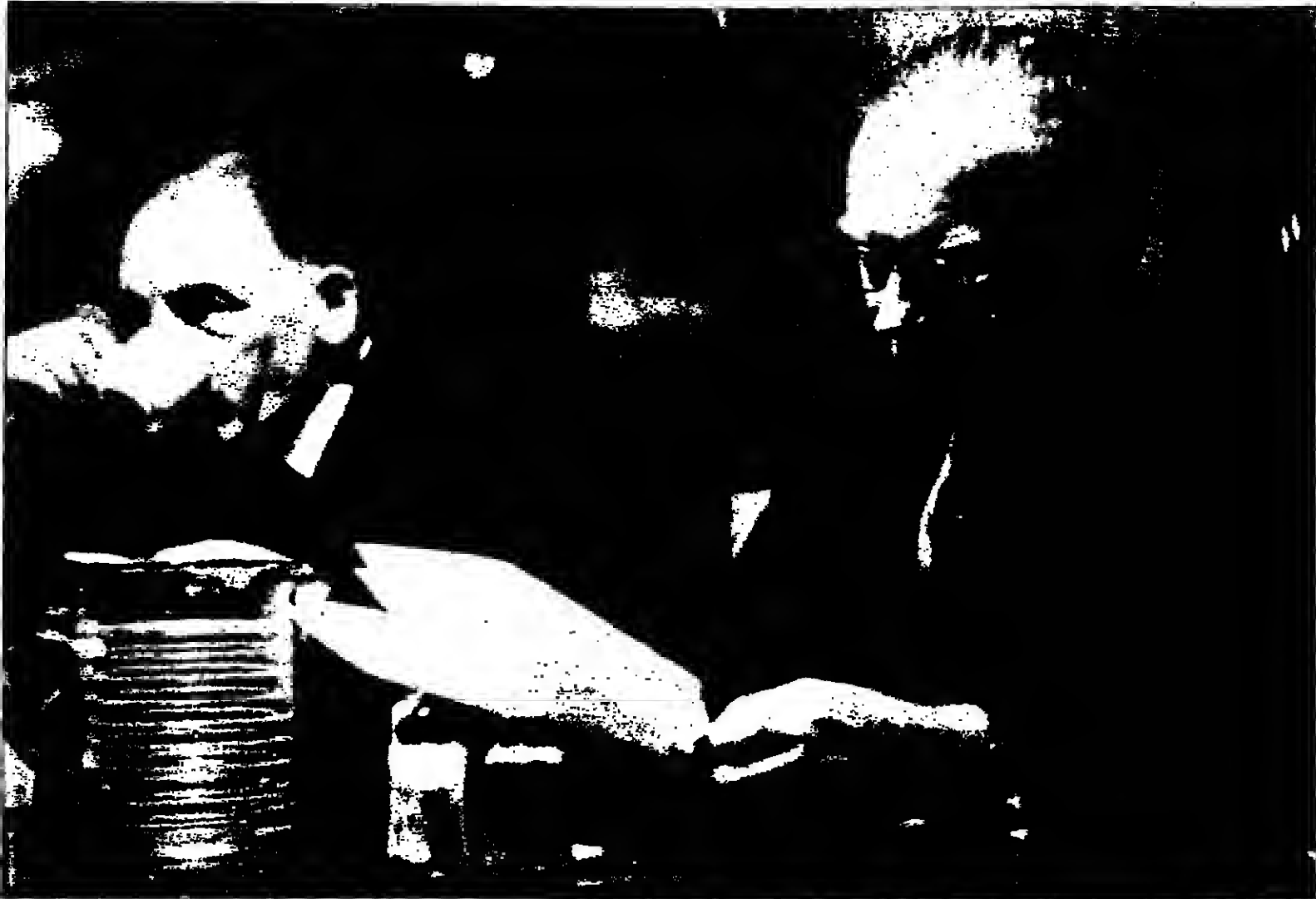
Houghton's tuition course proved a useful bait to draw new members into the AOTO; even those who could find no other reason for belonging to a trade union understood this to be a positive attraction. For 15 shillings, the AOTO was ready to provide new recruits with a six-month correspondence course. Houghton insisted on a written paper to answer, which arrived regularly once a fortnight, and the provision of a voluntary tutor, allocated to each student, drawn either from within the student's own office or from a nearby town. The dynamo behind this voluntary work was Houghton, and his passion for detailed care was such that the new recruits could hardly fail to pass the examination.

In the 1920s, the Civil Service was rigidly stratified. The clerical class was drawn from the secondary schools; the executive class from the sixth forms of the grammar schools, and the administrative class from the universities. Once a young person was tagged "clerical class", he or she could hardly, if ever, escape and improve themselves by internal means. So, in an age when for many families higher education was an impossible dream, there was a host of young people confined to the clerical class who were quite as able as those in the executive class – and, indeed, some university entrants.

Houghton perceived this situation, and rather than resort to posturing and ranting about the inequities of the class system, tried to do something constructive about it. He persuaded the Board of Inland Revenue to hold an internal examination that would enable members of the clerical class to be promoted to the tax inspectorate. After much patient negotiation, believing that in life more flies were caught with honey than with vinegar, Houghton persuaded the Revenue to institute an examination from which 10 clerks a year would be selected for promotion.

This examination may seem proverbial small beer nowadays; it was the opening up of a chink in the rigid system of class stratification of the 1920s which, apart from all else, was to be so inefficient for the country. Houghton was a passionate believer that Britain – he was enormously patriotic – should be a land of equal opportunity. He also believed that the avenue to success should be kept open, and this was translated into staunch and committed support for Harold Wilson and Jimmy Lee, when the Oxbridge cabinet members were faint-hearted and sceptical about the Open University.

Since I stayed in London within a stone's throw of Houghton's Westminster pied-à-terre, at Marsham Court, between 1970 and 1974, it was a pleasure for me to walk back



Encyclopaedic knowledge: Douglas Houghton (right) at the BBC canteen in 1943, in a break from recording *Can I Help You?*

Photograph: Hulton Getty

with him after late-night votes, none of which, although he was in his mid-seventies, he thought he ought to miss as PLP Chairman. His father and mother, John and Martha, he described as orthodox, Victorian yeomen, for whom he had a lasting affection. At school, his headmaster was Frederick Attenborough, father of Richard and David Attenborough. What changed his life was the First World War, and, a fact to which he seldom referred, experience as a lad, barely turned 18, of the Battle of the Somme. From being a raw 16-year-old school leaver, and apprentice clerk in the local tax office, Houghton was catapulted into the trenches, as a Private in the Civil Service Rifles.

Albeit a man of vehement opinions, Houghton had the same attitude as Macmillan – since so many of all backgrounds had laid down their lives together, fellow countrymen were worthy of respect. Cheap abuse, so much the currency of modern politics, Houghton regarded with contempt, and he deprecated the behaviour of his own colleagues who indulged in it. "You know," Houghton would say in his gravelly voice, "once a lad has

witnessed his teenage contemporaries massacred in Flanders, one really does think that one has some obligation to try and make the world a more 'civilised' [one of Houghton's favourite words] place."

Forty-five years after Houghton was demobbed from the 60th Rifles, it was fitting that the Labour government of Wilson-Callaghan should appoint him to the Royal Commission on Standards of Conduct in Public Life. For Houghton, one of the things that really mattered in life was Good Behaviour. High up in Houghton's pantheon of Bad Behaviour was being petty. Walking back one night, after a particularly frustrating meeting of the PLP, Houghton told me, "If like me you feel you are lucky to be alive, living on borrowed time after the carnage of the Somme, you can be forgiven for becoming impatient with pettiness among colleagues!"

It was not without thought that he chose as his motto on his coat of arms when he was made a life peer in 1974 "Bear no base mind". Nor was it an accident that his armorial supporters were badgers, and that the centre-piece should be a barn-owl statant. This re-

flected his abiding interest in animal welfare, and his vice-presidency of the RSPCA from 1978 to 1982.

From 1941, Houghton had become a household name. In the days when the BBC Home Service was unchallenged, the *Can I Help You?* programme – partly because it certainly could help you – was followed by millions. Perhaps the most effective contributor of all was Houghton. His knowledge of tax in particular, and the government machine in general, was encyclopaedic. It was also expressed with avuncular common sense, with something of a rasp. For Houghton a spade was a spade. The advice was sound. And it was not hectoring.

His period as an alderman on the LCC, from 1947 to 1949, forged a link with Herbert Morrison. Albeit Houghton was over 50, saw his life in the Trade Union Movement, and did not entertain parliamentary ambitions, it was Morrison who persuaded him that it was his duty to go forward in the Sowerby by-election. This had been the seat of John Belcher, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade in the Attlee government, and in the wake of the Lynskey Tribunal into an

episode of what by today's standards would be petty corruption (Belcher was accused of ministerial misbehaviour in relation to spivs and the black market), a candidate of national reputation was required to hold the seat, and Labour's hitherto unblemished record in by-elections.

That, after entering the House of Commons, Houghton became identified neither with the Bevanites nor the Gaitskillites, or any of the factions in the fractious Labour Party of the 1950s, is due to the fact that he spent the decade as a busy member of the General Council of the TUC. In addition to remaining General Secretary of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation, Houghton was in the pivotal position of Chairman of the Staff Side of the Civil Service National Whitley Council from 1956 to 1958, at a period of delicate tensions between the public sector and the Macmillan government.

When he embarked on his ministerial career Houghton was already 66 years old. Perhaps it was his immense skill at negotiation and compromise, or perhaps it was the fact that he was given the non-job of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, co-ordinating the Social Services, that gained Houghton the reputation of being an indecisive and uncomfortable minister. Besides, Anthony Crosland at Education, Dick Crossman at Housing, Peggy Herbyson at Pensions and Kenneth Robinson at Health, directly responsible for major Departments of State, were hardly the easiest colleagues to co-ordinate. But it was precisely the skills developed over 40 years that made Houghton an outstanding PLP Chairman, at a time of inordinate party difficulty over Vietnam, Prices and Incomes, and *In Place of Strife*. Had the querulous and capricious Emmanuel Shinwell continued as PLP Chairman past 1967, there would have been chaos in the parliamentary ranks of the governing party.

It is difficult to identify anyone else who could have been so acceptable to the Left, the Trade Union Group, the Loyalists, and indeed the Cabinet itself from which Wilson had gently sacked him at the age of 69. Gruff and pugnacious, Houghton was a broker *par excellence*. It was a measure of his success that it occurred to no one to challenge him, between November 1970 and February

1974, when it was his task to help Labour in Opposition ride the colossal tensions generated by Ted Heath's entry into the EEC. No septuagenarian ever rendered more service to his political party. Devoid of vanity, Houghton had a wry, peppery, funny, self-deprecating humour that defused many an ugly situation, though chairing the PLP in fraught circumstances, at the age of 75, risked in one of his favourite phrases "driving this ancient war-horse to apoplexy".

An Indian summer, which lasted for 20 years, began in 1974, when Houghton was created a life peer. "I am free as a bird to pursue the issues that I care about." And those issues included the Reform of the Constitution, Population and Development, the House of Lords Industry Study Group, Commonwealth Scholarships, and Teacher's Pay, on which he chaired the 1974 inquiry.

But two issues, in particular, dominated the evening of Houghton's life, and both were close to the heart of his wife, the truly formidable Vera Travis, who, after 47 years of close marriage, died in 1986 – animal welfare and abortion law reform. No vice-president of the RSPCA was more active, and no abortion law reformer more vigilant.

In 1986, when those of his contemporaries still alive were over eighty, more than 60 of them gathered in the House of Lords to pay tribute to Houghton. Understandably,

One of my lasting memories of Douglas Houghton was in the House of Lords, listening to the silver voice of his supporter, the distinguished law lord Lord Templeman at 10pm on Wednesday 27 March this year, then seeing him stagger to his feet, shielded by the caring arms of Lord Graham of Edmonton, to make the final speech on the Dogs Bill which was so dear to his heart. Even in his 98th year he was a crusader for the causes he believed in.

Tam Dalyell

Arthur Leslie Noel Douglas Houghton, politician; born Long Eaton, Derbyshire 11 August 1898; Secretary, Inland Revenue Staff Federation 1922-60; Alderman, London County Council 1947-49; Member of Parliament (Labour) for Sowerby 1949-74; member, General Council, TUC 1952-60; Chairman, Staff Side, Civil Service National Whitley Council 1956-58; Chairman, Public Accounts Committee 1963-64; PC 1964; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 1964-66; Minister Without Portfolio 1966-67; CH 1967; Chairman, Parliamentary Labour Party 1967-70, 1970-74; created 1974 Baron Houghton of Sowerby; married 1939 Vera Travis (died 1986); died Canterbury, Surrey 2 May 1996.

Eric Houghton



Houghton, 'howitzer'

When Eric Houghton kicked a football, it was sensible not to stand in its path. Between the wars, as an Aston Villa and England left-winger, he established a reputation as one of the most destructively powerful marksmen the game had seen. Off the pitch, though, the author of those famously violent strikes was a mild and courteous fellow, and throughout his subsequent career as a manager, the high light of which was leading his beloved Villa to FA Cup glory in 1957, he ruled by a quiet strength of character which earned him widespread respect. Houghton had seemed destined for a life in soccer since his teenage days as a prodigiously prolific centre-forward who revelled in turning out for his school on a Saturday morning, then playing for his village side in the afternoon. After excelling in local non-League cir-

cles, notably with Boston Town, he was recommended to Aston Villa by an uncle who had once played for the club, signing amateur forms in 1927 and giving up a bakery job to turn professional a year later.

Having been converted into a flanker – Villa were magnificently served in the centre by the revered 'Pongo' Waring – Houghton gained rapid promotion to the senior side, uncharacteristically missing a penalty on his debut in January 1930 but impressing generally with his dashing style, his slick manipulation of the ball and, above all, his shooting prowess.

Clearly the eager rookie offered immense promise, but no one expected the Houghton star to ascend quite so instantly as it did during the season of 1930-31, in which he scored 30 times as Villa finished as First Division runners-up, and he was rewarded by an England call-up. He netted in that game, too, a 5-1 victory over All Ireland, and could count himself unlucky that his prime coincided with the manager's Cliff Bastin, whose brilliance ended Houghton's international involvement only two years later.

At club level, however, the Villa man continued to flourish, and he played a major part in the club's Second Division championship triumph of 1938.

All the while the Houghton "howitzer" grew in renown and he became a dead-ball specialist, many of the 170 senior goals he netted before leaving Villa Park in 1946 having come from penalties and free-kicks.

Houghton's new club was lowly Notts County, for whom he played until 1949 when he took over as manager and, with England centre-forward Tommy Lawton at his disposal, led them to the Third Division (South) title in his first campaign at the helm. Three terms of unspectacular consolidation followed before he took the job closest to his heart, that of bossing Aston Villa. Outrightly but firmly, he set about revitalising a once-great club now fallen on mediocre times. He gave youngsters a chance and he spent heavily on well-known recruits, but could not achieve his ambition of mounting a realistic championship challenge.

There was uplifting consolation in 1957, though, when the Villans upset the odds to beat newly-crowned League champions Manchester United in the FA Cup Final, albeit in controversial circumstances after United's goalkeeper was seriously injured. However, hopes that the Wembley victory would inspire a general recovery were dashed and, with his side struggling near the foot of the table,

a sad Houghton was sacked in November 1958.

Thereafter the popular East-countryman joined Nottingham Forest as chief scout and bossed non-League Rugby Town in the early 1960s, before serving Walsall in various capacities, including director. Next he enjoyed a second return to Villa Park, pioneering the club lottery before taking a seat on the board for seven years from 1972, and in 1983 was elevated to senior vice-president.

Houghton – who in his youth had been a sporting all-rounder proficient even at cricket to play for Lincolnshire at Minor Counties level and Warwickshire Seconds – retained his fervour for football to the end, watching Villa regularly at senior, reserve and youth level until ill health curtailed his activity during the current season. He never tired of reminiscing with supporters, never refused to sign an autograph, was never less than a perfect gentleman. When Eric Houghton died, Aston Villa lost one of their most popular managers and an ambassador of immeasurable worth.

Ivan Ponting

William Eric Houghton, football player, manager and administrator; born Billingham, Lincolnshire 29 June 1910; died Birmingham 1 May 1996.

David Davis

Children's Hour, which stirred the imagination of countless young listeners, reached its heyday under the direction of David Davis, as he was commonly known. These were the days of Uncle Mac, *Larry the Lamb*, *Worzel Gummidge* and *The Wind in the Willows*.

Davis had joined *Children's Hour* at the beginning of 1935 as a staff accompanist. After education at the Queen's College, Oxford he had qualified as a professional musician and become a schoolmaster. When the vacancy for an accompanist occurred on *Children's Hour*, one of the regular producers, Barbara Leigh, recalled a young man who had taught at her uncle's school and who used to improvise at the piano with skill and pleasure. She found that he had moved to Bemburgh School in the Isle of Wight.

Davis was sent a copy of *The Listener's* advertisement which got delayed in the post, so that when he applied it was past the closing date. However he was given an audition, did well at sight-reading a difficult piece, and was offered the vacancy. The Headmaster of Bemburgh commented: "Sir, this is not the act of a gentleman", adding "That man will go strutting through life."

Soon Davis was also found to be an excellent performer at the

microphone as a reader. His first long serial reading was Anna Sewall's *Black Beauty*. After his retirement he made professional recordings of this much-loved story, as well as of *The Wind in the Willows* and *Kipling's Just So Stories*. He was able to persuade the Kipling estate to allow his stories to be broadcast – provided that there were no changes.

Early in 1936 Davis married Barbara Leigh. Under the BBC rules at the time a married couple were not allowed to work in the same department. Barbara had to resign from the staff, but as a freelance she continued to adapt books for dramatic presentation on *Children's Hour*. Davis himself adapted A.A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh*, which entranced countless children over the years with Norman Shelley playing Pooh.

At the outbreak of war Davis was seconded to the Fire Service in London, but soon joined the *Children's Hour* team, which were broadcasting from Bristol with Derek McCulloch (Uncle Mac), the Head of *Children's Hour*, as the chief presenter. He introduced the future Queen on her first broadcast on *Children's Hour* from Windsor Castle on 13 October 1940.

Davis joined the RNVR in 1942, serving mainly in the Mediterranean, and for a time

attached to the Hellenic Navy. The staff gave him a pipe lighter – he was always a keen pipe smoker – which went down with the rest of his possessions when his ship was sunk. But he survived, worked for a while in



Davis: *Children's Hour*

forces broadcasting, and in 1946 rejoined his London colleagues.

Davis became the Head of *Children's Hour* in January 1953, with Josephine Plummer as his Assistant Head. His office was in the Langham Hotel, where he had a notice-board of letters and drawings, many from young listeners, and a collection of toy animals. In the corner was a small piano on which he improvised. At this time television began to emerge as a rival for children's attention. However it

did not occur to the *Children's Hour* staff that the well-established, popular radio programme would ever disappear.

Nevertheless, children in their millions were now turning to watch the box. By 1964 the daily listening audience to *Children's Hour* had dropped to a mere 25,000. Frank Gillard, who had become the Director of Radio the year before, decided it must be terminated. It happened on Good Friday, which Davis thought was appropriate. There was a critical motion in Parliament, signed by 60 MPs, but the deed was done.

Davis spent the last six years of his BBC career as a drama producer, specialising in Victorians, for which he had a passion. Particularly remembered is George Eliot's *Middlemarch* with Jill Balcan. In retirement he continued reading stories on the radio in that beautifully modulated voice.

Leonard Miall

William Eric Davis (David Davis), radio executive; born Mahvern 27 June 1908; Head of *Children's Hour*, BBC 1953-61; Head of *Children's Programmes* (Sound) 1961-64; drama producer 1964-70; retired 1970; married 1935 Barbara de Riemer Sleight (died 1982, one son, two daughters); died London 29 April 1996.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

DEATHS

SNELLS: Teresa Mary (née Purnell), died 1 May, peacefully, at home. Funeral on Tuesday 7 May at Battersea Street Baptist Church, West Street, at 11am. All enquiries to Ernest Langer and Son, 0171-223 5432.

For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, please telephone 0171-293 2011 or fax to 0171-293 2016. Charges are £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Birthdays

Mr James Brown, singer, composer and musician, 63; Miss Pat Chapman, former editor, *News of the World*, 48; Miss Betty Comden, playwright and screenwriter, 77; Mrs Kathy Cook, athlete, 36; Mr Henry Cooper, heavyweight boxing champion, 62; Sir Graham Day, former chairman, Cudbury Schweppes and PowerGen, 63; Mr Ben Elton, comedian and author, 37; Sir Russell Fairservice, former MP and chairman, Quality Guaranteed, 72; Sir William Glock, music lecturer and critic, 88; Li-Gun Sir Michael Gray, defence industries adviser, 64; Sir William Gray, former Lord Provost of Glasgow, 68; Dr David Harrison, MP, Selwyn College, Cambridge, 66; Professor Ruth Lis-

ter, social economist, 47; Mr Eddie Loyden MP, 73; Colonel Sir Michael McCorkell, Lord-Lieutenant of County Londonderry, 71; Miss Sheila McKechie, director, Consumers Association, 48; Sir Christopher MacRae, High Commissioner to Pakistan, 59; Mr Randle Marward, poet and author, former insurance broker, 84; Mr Peter Oosterhuis, golfer, 47; Professor Anne Robertson, Roman numismatist, 86; Baroness Seccombe, Vice-Chairman, Conservative Party, 66; Mr Peter Seeger, folk singer, 77; Dr Norbert Singer, former Vice-Chancellor, Greenwich University, 65; Mr Norman Thelwell, illustrator, 73; Miss Sandy Toksvig, comedienne, 38; Mr Allan Wells, athlete, 44.

Anniversaries

Births: Niccolò di Bernardo dei Machiavelli, author and statesman, 1469; Richard D'Oyly Carte, operatic impresario, 1844; Golda Meir (Goldie Meyerson), Israeli prime minister, 1898; Mary Astor, actress, 1906. Deaths: James Morrison, patent pill purveyor, 1846; Herbert Fagben, critic and playwright, 1945. On this day: Jamaica was discovered by Columbus, 1494; New Zealand was proclaimed a British colony, 1841; the first London production of the musical show *Annie* was staged, 1978. Today is the Feast Day of Saints Alexander, Eusebius and Theodosius, St James the Less, St Juvenal of Narni, St Philip the Apostle, St

Philip of Zell and Saints Timothy and Marc.

Lectures

National Gallery: Colin Wiggins, "Creative Copies (I): Francis Bacon and Velázquez's *Immaculate Conception*", 1pm. Exeter University: Pietar van Dijk, "Judicial Protection of Human Rights in Europe: divergence, coordination or integration?", 5.30pm.

Luncheons

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Sir Nicholas Bonsor MP, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, hosted a luncheon held yesterday at Lancaster House,

London SW1, in honour of Mr Nikoloz Lekidze, State Minister of the Republic of Georgia.

Lord Mayor of Westminster: Mr Alan Bradley, the Lord Mayor of Westminster, and Mrs Pamela Bailey, the Lady Mayoresse, were the hosts at a luncheon held yesterday at City Hall, London SW1. Among those present were:

Mr John Chisholm, Lord Mayor of London, and Mrs Chisholm; Mr David Allen, CBE, LCM; Asstt Mr Kenneth Ayer, Sheriff, and Mrs Ayer; Mr Paul Bellamy, Mr Peter Brooke MP; Mr Richard Burton; Benjamin Challen of Watford; Sir Paul Condon; Mr Robert Davies; Mr Nigel Doughty; An Verc; Marshall Michael Dickson; Sir John Egan; Mr Jesus Fainste; Mr Richard Gille; Lord and Lady Grady; The Rev Dr Peter Green; Dame Thora Hird; Mr Jeremy Isaac; Mr

Matthew Ives; Mr Matthew Parry; Lord Patten; Lady Wilson of Newnham; Lt-Col Helen Ross; Miss Marie-Louise Rossi; Mr and Mrs James Spragg; Sir Rodney and Lady Swanton; Mr Kevin Taylor; Mr Peter Temple-Morris MP; and Mrs Temple-Morris; Lady Thorneycroft; Mr and Mrs Sam Toy.

Synagogue services

Details of synagogue services to be held tomorrow may be obtained by telephoning the following. Sabbath begins in London at 8.15pm. United Synagogue: 0171-387 4300. Federation of Synagogues: 0181-282 2363. Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues: 0171-580 1663. Reform Synagogues of Great Britain: 0181-349 4731. Spanish and Portuguese Jews Congregation: 0171-289 2573. New London Synagogue (Masorti): 0171-328 1026.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS
The Queen, accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh, opens the new Library Building at Hereford Cathedral, Prince Edward opens the Granpian Police Force Control Room, Aberdeen.

Changing of the Guard
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 4pm.

Appointments

Mr Ivor Roberts, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, at Belgrade.
Mr Gregory Roelkens, to be British High Commissioner to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

مكتبة الجليل

Kwik Save losing the bean war

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

These are worrying times for Kwik Save, and management's decision to bring in Andersen Consulting to conduct a root-and-branch strategic review only adds to the concerns. Graeme Bowler and his team have tried just about everything in the last few years and nothing has worked. Turning outside for help seems to indicate that they have run out of ideas.

Kwik Save's central problem is an old one now. Its once-secure niche as "Britain's number one discount" is looking increasingly vulnerable. The supermarket is encroaching on Kwik Save's territory by offering equally cheap ranges on commodity products. When Kwik Save cut the price of baked beans to 3p, Tesco matched it. And while the supermarket park their tanks on Graeme Bowler's lawn, the threat from Continental discounters grows.

Kwik Save says that the only thing that is not up for grabs in the review is its position as a discount. The question is how to deliver it. A loyalty card looks unlikely as the company does not have the systems. An extension of the range would increase already-mushrooming costs. It looks an unenviable position, which is why analysts were cutting forecasts yesterday and predicting further falls in the share price, even after yesterday's 9 per cent slump from 468p to 428p.

Yesterday's disappointing results showed the same old problems, with a few new ones thrown in. Pre-tax profits were down 28 per cent to £44.2m. Though sales were up 8 per cent (or 1 per cent like-for-like) costs rocketed by 19 per cent.

Part of that rise was due to the company investing in a new distribution centre, re-writing its computer systems and staff training. And though buying terms have improved, pricing pressure on basic items such as beans, tomatoes and corned beef has hit the gross margin. The margin in the first half fell by 0.2 per cent compared with last year. There was also a warning that the margin would fall further in the second half due to continuing tough trading conditions.

Though like-for-like sales are up by 1 per cent since the year end, customer numbers continue to fall after the 3 per cent fall in the first half. The problems have forced the company to rein back its ambitious store opening programme. It will now open only 35 new stores this year, half the planned figure, reducing capital expenditure from £145m to £120m.

The Shoprite stores in Scotland and the North-east that were acquired last year are improving but still made a half-year loss of £3m. Kwik Save shares have fallen from more than 700p last summer to yesterday's 428p. But

Unilever cleans up its act

Unilever has had a torrid couple of years, highlighted by the group's humiliating withdrawal of its "new improved" Persil Power washing powder. But trading has hardly been inspiring either, reflected in a share price that has underperformed the rest of the market by 11 per cent since the beginning of 1994.

The hope is that things are now going to change, spurred by the root and branch management shake-up being instigated by Niall FitzGerald, set to take over as chairman of the UK side of the Anglo-Dutch group later this year.

The fruits of that could take another three years to come through, so yesterday's first-quarter results showing a

10 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £509m reflected actions taken by the previous regime. On the face of it, that looks a respectable result, given that sales were up only 7 per cent to £7.69bn in the same period.

But the figures were distorted by a number of one-offs. Fingers crossed, there should be no repeat of the £15m charge at Birds Eye Walls to cover the cost of the BSE scare. There was also a £30m adverse swing on exceptional, more than offset by a change in the treatment of stocks in the Liptons tea business in the US, which added £40m to profits.

Stripping that lot out, the picture is more mixed. Past cost savings are starting to show up in Europe, where margins would have been ahead but for the BSE hit, but they still have a long way to go. The US operation is holding its own against powerful competition, but the real potential for Unilever lies in its operations in Latin America and Asia. Boosted by acquisitions, the former showed underlying profits growth of 30 per cent in the latest three months, with volumes up 9 per cent. Even Asia managed volume growth of

around five times that of the US market, which was up just 1 per cent.

Unilever has trailed its rivals in recent years, highlighted by strong first-quarter sales figures from Nestlé yesterday. Profits of £2.45bn this year would put the shares, up 6p at £12.10, on a forward p/e of 15. It requires something of an act of faith to believe Unilever will get it right this time, but on balance a risk worth taking. Hold.

City welcomes Maiden placing

The City's appetite for new issues remains undiminished if the warm reception given to outdoor-advertising group Maiden is anything to go by. Maiden, which owns 25,000 poster sites around the country, was expected to be worth at least £65m when dealings start next Tuesday. In the event, a strong level of interest from institutional investors ensured the 9.6 million shares will be placed at 220p, valuing Maiden at a top-of-the-range £86.5m.

The placing will raise £17.9m to repay debts of £37m incurred when chief executive Ron Zeghibe bought out venture capital partners Morgan Grenfell Development Capital last year. Directors will retain about 60 per cent of the equity after the flotation.

On one level, Maiden is benefiting from scarcity value. Shares in More O'Ferrall, the only other quoted operator in the sector, have advanced in leaps and bounds on the back of strong growth in UK outdoor-advertising spend, which last year grew by up to 9 per cent. The industry forecasts similar advances this year.

A consolidation of the sector, which last year saw Maiden buy British Transport Advertising for £1.8m, has led to fewer and more professional players in the sector. Site illuminations, the steady growth in roadside traffic and better audience measurement techniques have also helped. And the increased fragmentation of the television, magazine and radio markets means poster sites could become the only medium capable of delivering mass audiences to advertisers.

How much all this is worth to investors is anybody's guess. More O'Ferrall, the market leader in the UK, stands on a forward P/E of almost 18 times and should command a higher rating thanks to a good track record of organic growth and lower debt levels. Shares in Maiden are tightly priced at 15 times future earnings, but they should still go at a decent premium.

Tarmac set to face the future with a green T

CITY DIARY

JOHN WILLCOCK

TARMAC

TARMAC

TARMAC

Tarmac

Tarmac

Tarmac

Tarmac

Getting it down to a T: The changing face of Tarmac

run-of-the-mill surname. However, I strongly resent the almost libellous implication that this makes me some sort of "druggie".

She said she has written to her MP Hugh Rayley and the Gas Consumers' Council. A British Gas spokesman said: "When the complaint was received the employee was questioned and admitted he was responsible. His contract terminated immediately. He had apparently regarded the whole matter as a joke."

The tumultuous saga of Sunday Business, the newspaper launched by entrepreneur

"Nirway, nil point." Readers of a certain age will remember Nirway was the first country to score nil in the Eurovision Song Contest. The country was completely overshadowed by its neighbour Sweden, which spawned the mighty Abba. All that has changed. Nirway won last year and is hosting the next competition, to be held on 18 May in Oslo.

Now the Eurovision sponsor SMD, the Norwegian Industrial and Regional Development Fund, is publishing a series of newsletters to spread the word about the country's "innovative enterprise culture." Did you know that Norway runs courses for Swedes on how to celebrate their national day? That "crispe made of air-dried prawn, cod and smoked salmon are the latest snack sensation in Nirway"? No, I didn't think so. Last but not least, Norway is the world's biggest camel exporter. All together now, "Boom bang-a-bang, boom bang-a-bang, that's how it goes."



Abba: Not Norwegian, unlike camel exports

Chief's resignation helps lift Holliday

PATRICK TOOHER

Shares in Holliday Chemicals closed 12p higher at 151p yesterday after the company announced the departure of Hugh Donaldson after just 18 months as its chief executive and issued a positive trading statement.

Mr Donaldson resigned from the board after indicating he did not wish to renew his contract on its expiry at the end of 1996. Holliday has appointed Mark Robbins and Robert Rae, man-

agers at two of its operating subsidiaries as joint chief executives, to replace him. They will report to chairman Michael Peagram in their new posts.

Mr Donaldson was recruited to the Huddersfield-based dyes and inks manufacturer from drugs giant Zeneca to take a hands-on management role and free Dr Peagram, who founded the company and combined the jobs of chairman and chief executive, to concentrate on strategy and acquisitions.

At first the partnership seemed to be paying off, but pressure on Mr Donaldson undoubtedly grew in January when Holliday issued a surprise profits warning which sent the shares crashing to a new low of 105p - well below the 1995p investors paid when the company joined the stock market three years ago.

Holliday blamed a squeeze caused by the high costs of raw materials and pressure on selling prices for its own products.

But yesterday Holliday struck a more upbeat note at the company's annual general meeting.

The company said the first three months of the year have shown "a substantial improvement" over the depressed trading performance in the second half of 1995.

"Although margins are not yet back to satisfactory levels, they are improving, and further benefits will accrue," Holliday said in a statement. It added that while the economy was still un-

certain, the destocking that hit its 1995 sales had finished.

Analysts, who had cut forecasts for this year's profits from £24m to £14m following the recent warning, welcomed the news but expressed little surprise that trading was well above the levels seen in the second half of last year.

They added that the improvement reflected measures taken to reduce costs and new products from Holliday's pharmaceutical business in Spain.

IN BRIEF

• House prices rose by a seasonally adjusted 0.7 per cent in April, their ninth consecutive monthly rise, Halifax said yesterday. Over the year to April house prices rose by 2.7 per cent, leaving them at roughly the same level as two years ago. Halifax said that if there was another rise in May it would raise its annual growth forecast of 2 per cent, but also warned that the Inland Revenue figures for transactions continue to indicate a fragile market.

• The Treasury launched a public consultation yesterday on its proposal to scrap the legal restrictions on trustees. Instead it is proposing that trustees would be treated as the legal owners of assets, able to invest at their own discretion as long as they satisfy normal requirements of due care. Individuals whose money it is would then come under the protection of the Financial Services Act.

• T&N, the auto and engine parts maker, is to take an £8m charge on the sale of assets in Zimbabwe and repeated its warning that growth will slow in the first part of 1996. Sir Colin Hope, chairman, also said the firm would not appeal a landmark asbestos damages case it lost. The case relates to a factory one of its predecessors owned in Armley, a suburb of Leeds. (Bloomberg)

• George Wimpey, Britain's largest homebuilder, said its decision to focus on homebuilding had been vindicated and predicted that it would post better profits this year than it did last year. Joe Dwyer, chairman, said both Wimpey and McLean's sales were similar to 1995, although they have improved during the last three weeks. Sales in the US were up 50 per cent from last year, in line with its expectations, and Australian sales were up 30 per cent. Wimpey said integration of McLean Homes, which Wimpey swapped with Tarmac plc in exchange for its minerals business, is going well. (Bloomberg)

• At least 10 million Chinese will own mobile phones by the year 2000, according to the official *Post and Telecommunications Daily*. Cellphone subscribers numbered 1.5 million in 1995 compared with 50,000 in 1991. Sales of telecommunications goods, including phones and pagers, is likely to reach £1.7bn a year over the next five years.

• Bank of Scotland cut the annual percentage rate on its Classic Visa and MasterCard credit cards by 2 percentage points to 18.5 per cent, effective from 1 June. It said this will make RBS' card rates as the lowest among the credit cards issued by the UK high street banks.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Boeing Power Intl (F)	24.0m (20.3m)	0.77m (0.32m)	0.88p (0.62p)	nil (-)
Bellway (F)	125m (114m)	12.3m (13.8m)	7.4p (8.5p)	2.55p (2.45p)
Bodys Group (F)	257m (220m)	32.7m (32.5m)	8.8p (11.5p)	3.4p (2.4p)
The Husham Group (F)	114m (108m)	-3.8m (-4.15m)	-4.15p (-2.7p)	1.3p (1.3p)
Kwik Save (F)	1.84bn (1.72bn)	44.2m (61.5m)	18.45p (26.3p)	5.95p (5.95p)
Leaseplan (F)	7.24m (7.13m)	-0.22m (-0.17m)	-1.2p (-0.2p)	nil (-)
Unilever (Q1)	7.68bn (7.19bn)	509m (483m)	17.11p (16.04p)	nil (-)

(F) - Final (Q) - Interim (Q1) - First quarter

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الحمد لله



The wave of Baby Bell mergers in the US is creating a whole new raft of major telecommunications companies. As in so many other industries, Britain may well have to reconcile itself to the second and third divisions'

A lost opportunity to join the first division

Do the collapse of takeover talks between British Telecom and Cable & Wireless mark, for Britain at least, the end of the mega-merger era? BT's brief and less than helpful explanation – that the risks outweighed prospective opportunities – certainly had that feel to it. Combine it with the Government's statement that the golden share in National Power and PowerGen is there to be used (more on that later), and it may well be that we are witnessing the end of the present wave of consolidating mergers in industry, finance and the utilities.

Some mergers, it appears, are just too ambitious and difficult to do, whatever the supposed industrial logic. All businessmen dream of subsuming their competitors to create the dream team, powerful and ready enough to take on the world. But when the practicalities are examined closely enough, it often proves impossible.

In this particular case it was a combination of pricing, regulatory and international partnership issues that finally sank the deal. Rod Olsen, C&W's acting chief executive, describes it as "a fruit cocktail" of problems, many of them so intractable that it made no sense to carry on. While the BT negotiations continued, Cable & Wireless became frozen in time, unable to pursue business opportunities with anyone else.

BT puts a rather different spin on events. For BT it was not so much the regulatory issues that sank the deal as the difficulty of persuading C&W to agree a realistic price.

Nonsense, says C&W. We never got round to discussing price. As always, the truth probably lies somewhere between. Plainly there was a price at which the deal could have been done but it was not one that C&W was prepared to contemplate. Valuing the two businesses for the purposes of merger was in any case made that much harder by the regulatory uncertainty BT faces in its own home market. Investment bankers came to believe they were dealing with a constantly moving target.

Whatever the truth, it seems a shame. Here was an opportunity to create a company with the critical mass to be up there with the best in the world. The wave of Baby Bell mergers in the US is creating a whole new raft of giant telecommunications companies. As in so many other industries, Britain may well have to reconcile itself to the second and third divisions. BT at least has a fall-back strategy to put it in the first. C&W doesn't even have that. Its own chief executive, whoever that may be, has quite a task on his hands.

Lang performs a double somersault

Another day, another hopelessly confusing message from the printing presses around at the Department of Trade and Industry. In as far as it is now worth even attempting to interpret the words of Ian

Lang, the Government's decision to retain its golden shares in National Power and PowerGen appears to put the kibosh on any prospect of a transatlantic bid from Southern Company of Georgia.

The thinking goes something like this: when we decided not to let the two generators buy regional electricity companies last week we thought we'd made it plain that vertical integration was off the menu.

But then you go along in your transit van to Nat Power's registrars and take away 40 boxes full of shareholder information. Obviously what we saying was too subtle. Well here it is with both barrels. The businesses ain't for sale.

The other interpretation, of course, is that National Power is for sale providing the bidder is bold enough to create adequate competition in the generating market by breaking it into several chunks. True, this is a minority interpretation, but it is perfectly consistent with the double somersault Mr Lang manages to perform in the space of his eight-line statement.

The Government, for entirely understandable political reasons appears to have linked ownership of the electricity industry with its structure by blocking any bids for the two generators – from whatever quarter – until it is satisfied there is "adequate competition in the generation and supply markets".

It might have been simpler, and more honest, to say we don't want any contested bids

for the two companies with all the attendant bad publicity this side of an election. But then a government supposedly committed to free markets couldn't possibly admit to such a simplistic explanation for using its golden share.

Roddicks give the City the treatment

Anita and Gordon Roddick have come up with a new all-over body treatment, specially formulated for the City. First they flagellate investors for putting shareholder value above nobler pursuits like the protection of the Amazonian rain forests. Then they sensitize the skin by waving around the idea of taking the business private. And finally, they apply the soothing balm in the shape of a pledge to raise the payout and reduce dividend cover.

As a means of bringing a glow to the cheeks, a 55 per cent increase in the dividend beats the plunge pool and a brisk working over with beech twigs any day. But whether Body Shop International has found the answer to its uneasy relationship with the investment community is less obvious. Despite their best endeavours, concepts such as "accelerating our dividend growth over and above the rate of earnings" clearly jar with the Roddicks' pre-occupation with ethical capitalism.

The Roddicks' explanation for why they

decided not to pursue their desire to take the business private should be taken with a large dose of peppermint foot lotion. The Roddicks are plainly still unhappy running a public company with all the obligations of disclosure that entails. And although Body Shop's shares rose pleasingly yesterday on the crest of the new-look policy towards shareholders which recognises the importance of dividend growth, there are plainly problems ahead.

The balance sheet may be ungarnished and cash flow may be strong but investors may also wonder when the growth is going to come from to help Body Shop deliver, even with the dividend cover cut back. The US market is a mess, not helped by Body Shop's own green credentials being put under the spotlight.

Power store openings are planned this year than last and while the potential for international expansion may be "huge", it will take more than a few new outlets in the Philippines and South Africa to spread the Roddick gospel around the globe.

In an ideal world, says Gordon, it would have been nice to celebrate the company's 20th anniversary with an increase in profits. In the Roddicks' ideal world there wouldn't be any shareholders, either. For the time being the two will have to rub along together until such time as the Roddicks can persuade the banks that a buyout is feasible, or a big brother comes along that can lift the yoke of public ownership from their shoulders.

Flotation boom: Three companies come to the market and find surprising strength

New issues in demand as flops are forgotten

PATRICK TOOHER

Further evidence that the new issues market is back to rude health came yesterday when three companies revealed strong interest in their flotation plans.

"We were a little surprised," admitted Ron Zeghibe, chief executive of the outdoor advertising group Maiden, which is joining the main stock market next week. "Demand for our shares has been pretty exceptional."

The new issues market has been in the doldrums in recent years after a number of spectacular stock market flops, most notably the computer service group McDonnell Information Systems (MDIS) and the aircraft components manufacturer Aeroflex Hamble.

But, encouraged by a buoyant stock market, investors have returned to the sector with interest in recent months. Maiden, which owns 25,000 poster sites around the country, was expected to be worth at least £65m but a placing price of 220p announced yesterday will value the company at £86.5m when dealings in the shares start next Tuesday.

The placing will raise £17.9m to repay debts of £37m incurred when Mr Zeghibe bought out venture capital partners Morgan Grenfell Development Capital last year.

The biopharmaceutical group Vanguard Medica, the largest of the companies to reveal flotation details yesterday, also got a friendly reception in the City. Vanguard said its placing of 11 million shares at 450p was several times oversubscribed.

Estimated net cash proceeds from the placing were around £46.5m – some £10m higher than originally expected.

The new capital from the placing, which values Vanguard at £111.5m, will be used to fund research of existing compounds and the acquisition of new compounds.

Vanguard is building a portfolio of new drug candidates through licensing and collaborative agreements. The company has an existing product line of five compounds, including treatments for migraines and inflammatory conditions. Trading in the shares is also due to begin on Tuesday.

Undoubtedly the highest-profile share launch came in the shape of the lingerie and night-wear specialist La Senza.

It is joining the junior Alternative Investment Market via a placing of 13.3 million shares at 150p each, valuing the company at over £50m and raising £19.4m. That compares with the £15m La Senza originally hoped to raise to fund expansion to more than 152 outlets over the next five years, compared with



Premium brand: La Senza plans to use funds from its issue to expand its lingerie chain

the 22 it has now. La Senza plans to roll out its premium brand, which is pitched above Marks & Spencer, the dominant player in a British lingerie market worth almost £1.5bn.

La Senza occupies a similar niche to Knickerbox, but the latter is a kiosk operation with

smaller stores concentrating on bras and knickers whereas La Senza offers a wider range of fashion items.

Competition in the sector is expected to heat up. Last year, Sheffield entrepreneur Stephen Hinchliffe's Facia group bought the Contessa chain of women's

lingerie shops and promised to redesign the range and broaden its appeal beyond women over 35.

The La Senza concept was developed by Suzy Slater, a quoted Canadian company which launched shops in the UK at the end of 1994.

Surge in US growth puts Fed on rate alert

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

Undeterred by a ferocious winter, government shutdowns and the worst strike at General Motors in a quarter of a century, the US economy expanded far more strongly than expected in the first quarter. The news is an election-year boost for President Clinton, but a signal that the next interest rate move by the Federal Reserve may be an increase rather than a cut.

According to provisional figures from the Commerce Department yesterday, gross domestic product grew by 2.8 per cent, far more quickly than the feeble 0.5 per cent recorded in the last three months of 1995. The strong performance suggests that current forecasts of a bare 2 per cent growth for the year – the IMF last month predicted 1.8 per cent expansion – are decidedly on the conservative side.

The growth seems to have been across the board, led by a surge in consumer spending, up 3.5 per cent, and a 12 per cent jump in fixed corporate investment. The inventory reductions by business which braked the economy in the last part of 1995 also seem to be over, analysts said.

Without the severe weather, including the record blizzard which shut down the North-east for a week in January, and the government lay-offs caused by the protracted budget dispute, growth would have been 0.2 per cent higher still, the Commerce Department estimated.

In a further sign of better times ahead, factory orders also rose strongly in March – by 1.5 per cent, almost double what had been expected by Wall Street.

For the seventh month running, US industry's backlog of unfilled orders rose, by 1 per cent during the month. For President Clinton the growth resurgence has come at

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For the seventh month running, US industry's backlog of unfilled orders rose, by 1 per cent during the month. For President Clinton the growth resurgence has come at

a perfect moment. Not only will it strengthen the White House case that the economy is in capable hands as the election approaches, but should also help to dispel public anxieties over jobs and corporate downsizing.

The one potential area for worry is inflation. While consumer prices are advancing at a modest 2.5 per cent or so, the implicit GDP deflator rose 2.1 per cent in the first three months, up from 1.8 per cent in the last quarter of 1995.

Most of the acceleration reflected a temporary jump in energy prices, but the Fed will be one the less watchful for that.

At the very least, a fourth successive cut in short-term rates now looks out of the question. "The overall level of economic activity is going to get people talking about a Fed tightening," Steve Richiuto, financial economist for Barclays de Zoete Weld, commented yesterday.

British Gas set to cut more than 250 jobs in research

PETER RODGERS
Business Editor

British Gas is set to cut more than 250 jobs in its research and technology laboratories. The company is expected to say the move to cut costs and increase efficiency is a prelude to a new drive to gain international contract research work in the gas industry.

A more independent role for the research and development centre would be consistent with British Gas's plans to demerge next year into a transmission and exploration business and a separate supply

company, both of which would be customers for research.

The main research body is the Gas Research Centre at Loughborough, which develops new technology for British Gas's own use, but it is also a commercial enterprise in its own right, selling research services to other companies.

The £100m Loughborough centre was opened in 1994 and a year later won a Royal Society of Engineering award for the development of a new ultrasonic gas meter, the only organisation to have won this three times. It claims to be the technological and scientific leader in the in-

ternational gas industry. Last year British Gas spent £60m on world-wide research and development, a reduction from £75m in 1994, £80m in 1993 and £89m in 1992.

This covered work on future gas supply, such as seismic studies, security of supply, cost reductions, energy-efficient heating for houses and research on gas-fired air conditioning systems. British Gas's technologists are also responsible for research on safety, the improvement of operational techniques and preservation of the environment.

Industry View, page 23

Body Shop pledges higher payout

NIGEL COPE

Body Shop International took the first steps towards improving its relations with the City yesterday when it announced plans to increase dividend payments to shareholders.

The move is an attempt by founders Gordon and Anita Roddick to offer the pipe of peace to City analysts and institutions that have been frustrated by Body Shop's underperformance and apparent discomfort with the demands of being a public company.

It comes just months after the Roddicks abandoned plans to take Body Shop private, a step that would have enabled them to give more money to environmental causes rather than distribute profits to shareholders.

Announcing a 42 per cent rise in the dividend for the year to March, Mr Roddick promised to increase the dividend faster than earnings over the next two years. The shares rose 19p to 179p on the news.

Commenting on the new policy, Mr Roddick said: "Questions are often raised as to whether taking a socially responsible approach is consistent with delivering shareholder value. We have no doubt that it is."

Body Shop's head of investor relations, Angela Bawtree, said the company was trying to maintain a balance between the group's environmentally conscious principles and the interests of shareholders. "Clearly that balance had tipped too far away from shareholders. To some extent this is an attempt to redress that balance."

The company admitted that its dividend yield had been poor and its share price had underperformed the market.

The dividend announcement came as Body Shop reported a 2 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £32.7m with the Body Shop stores in the US continuing to struggle.

Shipping out the contribution of new stores, sales in America fell by 6 per cent last year due to intense competition and the low level of awareness of the Body Shop brand. "Perhaps we haven't been marketing the way we should," Ms Bawtree said. Though sales have continued to fall since March and are down by 6 per cent, she added that Body Shop had increased spending on promotion.

tions though much of this is in stores rather than through advertising.

Body Shop has 273 stores in America but will open only 14 more this year as it tries to improve the performance of existing outlets.

The performance in the UK stores was better, with sales up slightly but profits flat. The Body Shop direct concept is performing with home delivery offered in 140 of the 252 UK stores. Only five new UK outlets will open this year. Body Shop has also abandoned plans to start an in-store radio station, saying it would be too expensive.

Asia continues to be the growth market, with the 170 stores lifting like-for-like sales 15 per cent. The increased dividend was 3.4p.



Pipe of peace: Body Shop co-founder Anita Roddick

GUS shocks City with its first profits warning

NIGEL COPE

Great Universal Stores, the mail order giant, stunned investors yesterday when it issued its first profits warning since coming to the stock market in 1964. It blamed lower sales in its home shopping division caused by weaker demand, higher paper costs and the unseasonal weather.

Though the warning was mild, it surprised City analysts who have come to rely on GUS

as one of the market's steady, if unspectacular performers. John Richards of NatWest Securities said: "It is only a modest adjustment but it is a shock coming from GUS. The whole idea of GUS is that it is a stock that allows you to sleep at night."

Another analyst said: "It is unprecedented. These things just don't happen with GUS." The shares fell 30p to 687p.

The company insisted that its first ever trading statement was not a "warning" but a "clarification". Richard Pugh, chairman of the group's home shopping division, said: "It is not any sort of warning. We saw

what the forecasts were and felt the market would appreciate us clarifying the position. Some analysts' forecasts had run rather ahead."

He added that, barring unforeseen circumstances, GUS would still report its 48th consecutive year of increased profits when it reports its results in July. Even the lower profits of £578m would be higher than 1995's £560m.

The company said unaudited

profits for the year to March 1996 indicated a 3.5 per cent increase in group sales with consumer and corporate finance advances up 5 per cent.

The home shopping business has seen demand affected by a "cautious and selective approach from customers", as well as the unseasonal weather and higher paper and printing costs, which had made the group's catalogues more expensive to produce.

Home shopping sales in the UK would be some 2 per cent lower, though sales in Europe were 5 per cent up.

Other main trading divisions in the group, such as the Burberry chain, should show a "satisfactory improvement" in profits, the company said. The company has also collected a lower level of VAT in previous years the company has received interest payments on VAT overpayments.

Laura Ashley strikes fragrance deal



Laura Ashley, the clothing and furnishings retailer, has struck an exclusive worldwide licensing agreement with L'Oréal for the French cosmetics company to develop and sell fragrances, toiletries and skincare products under the Laura Ashley name.

Ann Verson, Laura Ashley's chief executive (above), said: "It is a perfect partnership and they give us the advantage of worldwide distribution and considerable marketing expertise." The products will be sold not only in Laura Ashley shops but through drugstores, department stores and French hypermarkets. News of the deal lifted Ashley's shares almost 3 per cent to 215p.

market report/shares

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
3776.4 -29.6

FT-SE 250
4537.7 -2.4

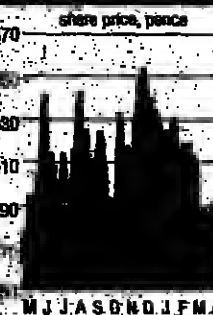
FT-SE 350
1914.1 -11.8

SEAQ VOLUME
924.1m shares

33,101 bargains

Gifts Index
92.05 -0.41

Commercial Union



Latest Whitehall shocker puts skids under generators

Power shares suffered yet another Whitehall shock. Generators National Power and PowerGen slumped once it became known the Government intended to hang on to its "golden shares", which, in effect, kills hopes of hostile takeover bids.

NP fell 32p to 527p and PG 12p to 536p; both touched 51p. Since Southern Company, the US group, disclosed its intentions towards NP the shares have fallen from 605p. The highly-charged decision destroyed a stock market rally. It had, without much conviction, overcome worries about the local election results and today's US payroll figures. Even worse-than-forecast results from the Kwik Save food discount chain failed to rattle sentiment. But the Whitehall block and a surprise profit warning from the Great Universal Stores mail order and retail giant proved too much.

If the BT bombshell - the end of merger talks with Cable & Wireless - had appeared during trading shares could have gone into free fall. It came after hours although, with BT down 8p at 352p, some clever souls managed to anticipate the break-down. The shares are likely to fall sharply today as the talks have illustrated just how desperate BT is for a Cable-style merger. Cable rose 3p to 524p and, after initial uncertainty, is likely to strengthen on takeover hopes.

The FT-SE 100 index ended 29.6 points down at 3,776.4 in often brisk trading. The supporting index lost 2.4 to 4,537.7. Yet in early trading it had all looked so different. Two programme trades helped lift Footsie 23.4; so the downturn wiped more than 50 points from the index.

The generative veto, which can hardly support the case for investing in Railtrack even



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

with the sort of yield reserved for the most highly speculative share, is the third blow electricity shares have suffered in less than 18 months.

The Littlechild debacle in January last year sent the sector into a spin and last month came the surprise block on the generators' bids for two distributors.

The decision to make the generators bid-proof will almost certainly reduce the chances of the cash-rich duo indulging in generous dividend payments and share buy-backs.

It takes a lot to fuse the market's takeover excitement and in the volatile atmosphere some distributors, such as Le-

don Electric, moved ahead in the belief the Government's actions could encourage overseas predators. London gained 13p to 826p.

Commercial Union, the insurance group, recaptured takeover fever. The shares touched 600p, closing up 9p at 590p as stories circulated of a bid, with France's Société Générale and Germany's Allianz, the names in the frame.

Ladbroke, the betting and hotel group, had another high turnover session although the shares only managed a 2p gain to 195p. Barclays de Zoete

Wied was said to have put a 210p valuation on them. GUS fell 30p to 687p and

Kwik Save 40p to 428p. Argos, after a bright start which took the price to 667p, relapsed to 648p, down 1p. It is said its offer for one of the Signet jewellery chains has been turned down. Signet fell 3.25p to 26.75p. Body Shop International gained 19p to 179p on the 55 per cent dividend increase.

British Airways rose 4p to 524p. Reports that orders for new aircraft for regional routes had been pulled back were seen as reducing rights issue pressure.

Regal Hotels made a strong return. Suspended at 44p since January when it opened talks to buy the White Hart hotels chain the shares stretched to 56p in busy trading. The convertible, offered at 100p, went to 119p.

The White Hart deal represents the first big disposal from the Forte empire since Granada gained control. Regal

paid £120m for 60 White Hart properties, increasing its chain to 83.

Ramco Energy, with oil and gas interests in the former Soviet Union, firmed to 595p as Henderson Crosthwaite placed 960,000 shares at 592p.

Brightstone Properties had an eventful time. It announced a consortium, including the ubiquitous Luke Johnson, would subscribe for 300,000 shares and the group saw its future outside the property industry. Mr. Johnson would join the board.

In less than an hour Clarke, Nickolls & Coombs, once a sweetmaker, now a property play, produced a 124p share exchange offer with Brightstone shareholders representing 14.4 per cent accepting. CNC said other shareholders with 29.5 per cent had "signed letters of support". The action left Brightstone up 18p to 120p and CNC unchanged at 7.75p.

TAKING STOCK

□ BHR, the Australian giant, is to continue to explore the Chapare oil field in Bolivia, on which it has already spent £20m. Its decision should please supporters of wicker share Pan Andean. The company has a 20 per cent interest in the field and BHR will start drilling there in the next few months. Pan Andean shares have graced ahead of the announcement. They climbed from 12p to 90p in 12 months as excitement has grown about its Bolivian adventure.

□ Rhino, the video games retailer, rose 1.5p to 15p. It is due to change its name to Electronics Boutique, reflecting the identity of its big shareholder, and under new management is said to be making headway. Christmas is the key trading period, accounting for 40 per cent of sales.

Alcoholic Beverages

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
Adnams	10.00	0.00	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100
Guinness	10.00	0.00	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100
Paulaner	10.00	0.00	100
Pilsener	10.00	0.00	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100
Tennent	10.00	0.00	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100

Banks, Merchant

Share	Price	Chg	Vol
Barclays	10.00	0.00	100
Bank of Scotland	10.00	0.00	100
City of London	10.00	0.00	100
Commercial Union	10.00	0.00	100
First National	10.00	0.00	100
London & Lancashire	10.00	0.00	100
Midland	10.00	0.00	100
National Westminster	10.00	0.00	100
Paragon	10.00	0.00	100
Prudential	10.00	0.00	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	10.00	0.00	100
Scottish Widows	10.00	0.00	100
Standard Bank	10.00	0.00	100
Union Bank	10.00	0.00	100
Windsor	10.00	0.00	100

Banks, Retail

35 1/2	27 1/2	ABN Amco	135 1/2	+ 1/2	48	120	.
60 1/2	52 1/2	Abbey Ink	345	+ 7	49	107	54 1/2
35 1/2	32 1/2	Adel Ink	366	+ 6	35	100	135 1/2
50	48 1/2	Anglo Ink	84	.	58	249	135 1/2
85 1/2	73 1/2	Amst	384 1/2	- 1/2	88	.	304 1/2
33 1/2	25 1/2	Amc NC	322	+ 1/2	54	.	.
74 1/2	62 1/2	Bancorp Co	123 1/2	.	18	.	222 1/2
25 1/2	22 1/2	Banco Bilbao	125 1/2	+ 1/2	38	.	.

F1 RACING

THE INDEPENDENT

PLAY FORMULA 1 DREAM TEAM



WIN a drive in a Grand Prix car



GRAND PRIX '96 RACE SCHEDULE

San Marino GP
May 5
Monaco GP
May 19
Spanish GP
June 2
Canadian GP
June 16
French GP
June 30
British GP
July 14
German GP
July 28
Hungarian GP
August 11
Belgian GP
August 25
Italian GP
September 8
Portuguese GP
September 22
Japanese GP
October 13



Formula 1 Dream Team is just like Fantasy Football: you pick and manage your dream grand prix team to score points over the coming season.

Even though the grand prix season has started, it is not too late to join in: pit your wits against other enthusiasts and you could win our overall 1996 champion's prize, a drive in a Formula One car plus additional prizes for each race.

Your team must comprise three drivers, a chassis and an engine; your budget is £40 million.

Make your selections from the grand prix shopping list printed below; the only restriction is that your third driver must come from the £1 million category.

Details of how to enter are given on this page. You can enter a team at any point during the grand prix season but the earlier you enter, the greater your chances of being our overall champion. Remember, there are prizes for the winning Dream Team in each individual grand prix so you can enter a different team for each race.

HOW YOU SCORE

Points are awarded per race to the top six finishers, based on the Formula One World Championship points scoring system (10, 6, 4, 3, 2, 1) but with an extra 10 points awarded to each of the top six finishers.

All drivers are eligible to score for a top six finish but can also notch up extra points as follows:

- The fastest driver in race-day warm-up will collect six points, with five for the second and so on down to one point for the sixth quickest.
- Drivers score one point for each place they make up over their grid position. Points are not deducted by losing places.
- Five points are lost if your driver posts first retirement, four for second down to one point lost for the fifth retirement.
- If your driver makes the quickest pit-stop (from the entry of the pitlane to the exit) you gain five points.
- If your driver sets the fastest lap time in the race, you gain five points.
- If your driver receives a stop/go penalty, you lose five points.
- If your driver starts on pole position, you gain five points.
- The Independent will name a Driver of the Day after each race for a particularly impressive performance, worth five points.
- Non-qualification for a grand prix loses you two points. If a driver is on the FIA's published starting grid but fails to take the start, no points are lost.
- Drivers removed from the results for any reason lose all points gained that weekend. Any driver not competing in a grand prix weekend scores no points.
- Chassis score and lose points in the same way as drivers for a top six finish or any early retirement. The score is based on the first chassis home of that particular manufacturer. Likewise, only the first chassis retirement will count if they are both among the first five to retire.
- Engine rules are the same as the chassis rules, without the retirement penalties.



DREAM TEAM TOP PRIZE

The Dream Team manager with the highest number of points at the end of the Grand Prix Championship season will win our top prize - a drive in a 650bhp F1 car. You will be flown to the AGS team's training school in the south of France for the most exhilarating experience of your life. The school specialises in F1 courses and provides all the racewear and instruction you will need for the day.

SAN MARINO GRAND PRIX PRIZE

The Dream Team manager with the highest number of points following the San Marino Grand Prix will win a VIP trip for two to the French Grand Prix on 30 June.

European Grand Prix Prize Winner

Congratulations to Andrew Pike from London with his team AWP Grand Prix Racing. He has won our trip for two to the Spanish Grand Prix on June 2.

HOW TO ENTER

Choose your Dream Team from the shopping list on this page. Remember, you must choose three drivers (the third from the £1 million section), one chassis and one engine. You must not exceed your budget of £40 million.

Give your team a name and register it by ringing 0891 891 805.

You will immediately be asked the entry question: How many races are there in this year's Formula One World Championship?

To enter your Dream Team details you can use one of two methods.

Method 1 uses a tone phone that lets you key in the code numbers of your driver, chassis and engine choices. The computer will check that your team falls within budget and is eligible.

Method 2 uses a non-tone phone and give your details verbally. A budget check is not possible using this method.

When you have registered your Dream Team, you will be asked to predict the number of points this year's champion will notch up over the year. In case of a tie at the end of the season, the nearest figure to the champion's points will win the top prize. In the event of a further tie, the team that registered first will win.

Once you have registered your team you will be asked for your name, address and telephone number. Your team selections plus your personal details will be played back to you and, when you confirm that they are correct, you will be given a PIN number.

This is confirmation of your entry and will enable you to access the score checking line.

There is no limit on the number of teams an individual can enter, but only one team can be registered per call.

CHECKING YOUR SCORE

You can check your team's position at any time by calling 0891 891 805 and quoting your PIN number. If you want to know the individual driver, chassis and engine scores from the most recent race, call 0891 891 807. This line will also list the Top 50 Formula One Dream Teams.

Rules

1. All telephone calls are charged at 39p per minute cheap rate, 49p per minute at all other times, with a typical call to secure your entry lasting between five and seven minutes.
2. The deadline to be included in a particular race is midday the Friday prior to that race.
3. The judge's decision is final, no correspondence will be entered into and there is no cash alternative for prizes.
4. Employees of Newspaper Publishing Plc, Haymarket Publishing Ltd and all associated companies and their families are ineligible.
5. Entrants must be 18 or over and residents of the UK or the Irish Republic.
6. To be eligible for the main prize, you must hold a current driving licence, be no more than 1.95m tall and weigh no more than 220lbs.
7. All scores will be worked out according to the official FIA time sheets produced at the meeting. The values stated for drivers, engines and chassis bear no relation to real life.
8. In the event of a tie for the Dream Team Top Prize or for any of the individual race prizes, the team that registered first will win.
9. For lost PIN numbers, call 0891 891 808. Helpline: 01275 344183.
10. The Top 50 Teams Line, lists the top 50 teams from the last race. Both the Team Position Check Line and the Results & Top 50 Teams Line will be updated at 2 pm on the Monday following a race.

Make your selection from the Grand Prix Shopping List

DRIVERS

£25m
1 M Schumacher
£23m
2 J Alesi
£20m
3 D Hill
£18m
4 G Berger
£15m
5 D Coulthard
£13m
6 E Irvine
£11m
7 J Villeneuve
£9m
8 M Hakkinen
£7m
9 H H Frenzen
£5m
10 M Brundage
£3m
11 R Barrichello
£1m
12 J Herbert

CHASSIS

£8m
13 M Salo
£6m
14 P Lamy
£4m
15 P Diniz
£2m
16 U Katayama
£1m
17 J Verstappen
18 O Paris
£3m
19 I Badoer
£2m
20 R Rosset
£1m
21 A Montemini
£2m
22 G Fisichella
£1m
23 V Sospiri
£1m
24 T Marques
£1m
25 F Lagorce
£1m
26 H Noda
£1m
27 T Inoue

ENGINES

£1m
28 M Blundell
£1m
29 J-C Bouillon
£1m
30 K Brack
£1m
31 K Burt
£1m
32 E Collard
£1m
33 N Fontana
£1m
34 D Franchitti
£1m
35 N Larini
£1m
36 J Magnussen
£1m
37 A Prost
£1m
38 G Tarquini
£1m
39 K Wendlinger

*Not competing in the San Marino GP but may complete later.

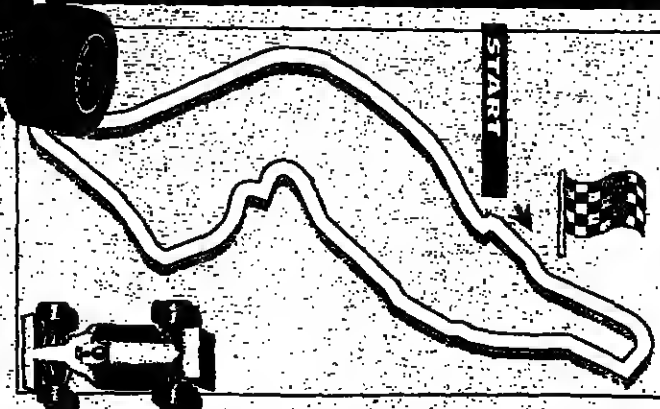
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40 Benetton
£18m
41 Williams
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42 Ferrari
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43 McLaren
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44 Sauber
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45 Jordan
£12m
46 Ligier
£11m
47 Tyrrell
£10m
48 Arrows

ENGINES

£3m
49 Minardi
£2m
50 Forti

San Marino Grand Prix, Imola



DREAM TEAM registration: 0891 891 805 ENTER TODAY

● TEAM POSITION CHECK LINE: 0891 891 805
● RESULTS & TOP 50 TEAMS LINE: 0891 891 807

مكتبة المجلد

Riyadian to cool Godolphin fervour

Racing
GREG WOOD

The average racing mind is not noted for its openness, but perhaps, as the Millenium approaches, we are growing just a little more liberal. Five years ago, the idea that the two main races at Newmarket this afternoon might be won by horses which had spent the winter in the Middle East would have seemed laughable. In 1996, however, the only surprise is not that such a thing is possible, but that everyone accepts it as part of the natural course of events.

Mick's Love, in the Newmarket Stakes, and Moonshell, last year's Oaks winner, in the Jockey Club Stakes, will give British racegoers their first sight of the Godolphin team this year, and what few hints there have been so far imply that their runners are every bit as fit and healthy after their winter in the sun as in seasons past. Mark Of Esteem, Godolphin's representative in the 2,000 Guineas tomorrow, started to shrink at the ante-post betting from the moment his plane touched

down. From a general 10-1, he was 8-1 before he retrieved his luggage, and as short as 6-1 by the time he reached customs.

Should either of today's principal Godolphin runners succeed, the run on Mark Of Esteem will turn into a headlong escape. While both will go to

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Flash In The Pan (Hamilton 4.30)
NB: Touch Silver (Newmarket 1.50)

post with realistic chances, they also face rivals who should have the beating of them.

Moonshell is worth opposing under her Group One penalty, and the choice here is Riyadi-an (next best 3.40). Paul Cole's colt had an unhappy run in the Derby last year, but returned to win two back-end races before running second to Spectrum in the Champion Stakes. Over a more suitable 12 furlongs today, he will be very hard to beat.

Mick's Love was the convincing winner last year of a conditions event at Newbury which often uncovers a top-class per-

former. Clever Cliche (3.05), by contrast, has won only a Nottingham maiden, but he did so despite finding trouble in running, and shortly after being supplemented to the Derby for £8,000. If Henry Cecil thinks he is worth that sort of outlay, who are we to argue?

Ladbrokes certainly seem to concur, quoting Clever Cliche at a very respectful 14-1 for the Derby, but such hefty late-entry fees might soon be outmoded if Epsom racecourse get their way. The executive would like to introduce a "wild-card" entry scheme for the Derby, which would allow one horse each year to run in the race even though his trainer had omitted to enter him - last year, for instance, Pentire might have been a popular choice.

The proposal seems to have come as a surprise to the British Horseracing Board, however. "This is news to me," John Smees, responsible for race planning, said yesterday. "This would need a lot of discussion as it is a whole new concept." Translation: don't hold your breath.

Anti-post betting would surely suffer if such a system were introduced, with punters reluctant to get involved when a new favourite could appear just before the race.

Some would argue that anything which discourages ante-post betting must be in the backers' favour and any spare cash today would be better invested on EXPENSIVE TASTE (nap 2.35). Michael Stoute's filly may prove to be above handicap company, and has surely been let in a few pounds light.

Lottery hits Levy revenue

Tristram Ricketts, chief executive of the BHB, yesterday described the Levy Board's provisional 4.7% cut in its prize-money contribution for 1997 as "a matter of grave concern".

The Levy Board's chairman, Sir John Sparrow, said that the decline in off-course betting turnover - attributable largely

to competition from the Lottery - had produced a deficit of revenue of £5.1m. That necessitates a provisional allocation of prize-money for next year of £28.5m, £1.4m down on 1996. "Hopefully the effect of the Lottery will work itself out after it has been in existence for one and a half to two years," Sparrow said.

NEWTON ABBOT

1.50 Touch Silver 2.25 Aljo Georgia 2.55 Roffe 3.30 Aljo For Luck 4.05 Daily Sport Girl 4.40 Aljo 5.10 Dealeo

GOING: Soft (good in soft in places).
Racecourse in north of town on A330. Newton Abbot station a mile away. (Information Newton 58.50). Course 54. Accommodation (1000) 1000. CAB PARKING: On site 1.50, remainder free.

SIS RACING
WINNERS: 1.50 Touch Silver (2) 1.50 Aljo Georgia (2) 1.50 Roffe (2) 1.50 Aljo For Luck (2) 1.50 Daily Sport Girl (2) 1.50 Aljo 1.50 Dealeo (2)

LONG-DISTANCE RACING: Newton Abbot (1000) 1000. The Wood's Academy (1000) 1000. (Information Newton 58.50). Course 54. Accommodation (1000) 1000. CAB PARKING: On site 1.50, remainder free.

1.50 TOUCH SILVER (2) 1.50 ALJO GEORGIA (2) 1.50 ROFFE (2) 1.50 ALJO FOR LUCK (2) 1.50 DAILY SPORT GIRL (2) 1.50 ALJO 1.50 DEALEO (2)

2.25 ALJO GEORGIA (2) 2.55 ROFFE (2) 3.30 ALJO FOR LUCK (2) 4.05 DAILY SPORT GIRL (2) 4.40 ALJO 5.10 DEALEO (2)

3.30 ALJO FOR LUCK (2) 4.05 DAILY SPORT GIRL (2) 4.40 ALJO 5.10 DEALEO (2)

4.05 DAILY SPORT GIRL (2) 4.40 ALJO 5.10 DEALEO (2)

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NEWMARKET

2.00 Dame Laura 2.55 Welville 3.05 Ramoos (nb) 3.40 Riyadian

GOING: Good.
Racecourse in south of town on A1304. Newmarket station a mile away. (Information Newmarket 58.50). Course 54. Accommodation (1000) 1000. CAB PARKING: On site 1.50, remainder free.

2.00 DAME LAURA (2) 2.55 WELVILLE (2) 3.05 RAMOOS (2) 3.40 RIYADIAN (2)

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HYPERION

4.15 SPILLO (nap) 4.50 Te Rdb 5.20 Miss Pravda

GOING: Good.
Racecourse in south of town on A1304. Newmarket station a mile away. (Information Newmarket 58.50). Course 54. Accommodation (1000) 1000. CAB PARKING: On site 1.50, remainder free.

4.15 SPILLO (2) 4.50 TE RDB (2) 5.20 MISS PRAVDA (2)

4.50 TE RDB (2) 5.20 MISS PRAVDA (2)

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PERTEMPS JOCKEY CLUB STAKES (CLASS A) (Group 2) £50,000 added 1m 4f Penalty Value £33,111

1. 10/1 MOONSHILL (2) 11/10 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 12/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 13/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 14/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 15/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 16/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 17/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 18/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 19/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 20/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 21/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 22/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 23/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 24/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 25/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 26/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 27/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 28/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 29/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 30/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 31/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 32/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 33/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 34/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 35/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 36/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 37/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 38/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 39/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 40/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 41/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 42/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 43/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 44/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 45/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 46/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 47/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 48/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 49/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 50/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 51/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 52/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 53/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 54/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 55/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 56/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 57/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 58/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 59/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 60/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 61/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 62/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 63/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 64/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 65/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 66/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 67/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 68/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 69/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 70/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 71/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 72/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 73/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 74/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 75/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 76/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 77/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 78/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 79/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 80/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 81/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 82/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 83/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 84/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 85/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 86/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 87/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 88/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 89/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 90/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 91/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 92/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 93/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 94/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 95/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 96/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 97/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 98/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 99/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 100/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 101/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 102/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 103/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 104/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 105/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 106/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 107/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 108/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 109/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 110/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 111/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 112/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 113/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 114/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 115/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 116/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 117/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 118/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 119/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 120/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 121/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 122/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 123/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 124/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 125/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 126/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 127/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (2) 128/1 VALLEY OF GOLD (

sport

Petchey hoping to lay Cup ghosts

Tennis
JOHN ROBERTS
reports from Newcastle

Tim Henman's illness has placed Mark Petchey in the Davis Cup firing line against Slovenia at Newcastle today, or as Britain's captain David Lloyd prefers, it has given the Essex man "a great chance to put behind him some of the ghosts he's had in singles".

The last spectre was Razvan Sabau, a 17-year-old Romanian ranked below 700, who was twice a set down to Petchey on a grass court in Manchester two years ago but recovered to win the final rubber, completing Britain's most humiliating defeat.

Petchey's solitary victory in nine Davis Cup singles matches was accomplished in Manchester in 1991 against Thomas Muster — the Austrian clay-court specialist who won his first senior match on grass in a Davis Cup tie in South Africa in February this year, four days before rising to No 1 in the world.

Today, on a fast indoor carpet, Petchey, originally selected for doubles, faces the Slovenian No 1, Iztok Bozic, ranked 216 places below him at No 419. Before then, Lloyd trusts, the big-serving Greg Rusedski will have given his team a winning start against the Slovenian No 2, Borut Uih, ranked No 478.

For tomorrow's doubles, Rusedski has taken Petchey's place alongside Neil Broad — a partnership born in Canada and South Africa — against Uih and Gregor Krsinic, who just about jogs the singles computer at No 1,257.

Should the Euro-African Zone Group II tie still be live on Sunday, Petchey contests the final rubber against Uih after Rusedski has played Bozic.

Petchey, while sympathising with Henman, views his promotion as an opportunity rather than an ordeal. "It's nice to get another chance, and I'm looking forward to it," he said. "It's different for me now. I'm coming on the team now as a doubles player and as a No 3 singles player in case someone gets sick. I hope I play to the way I've been practising."

Lloyd hopes so, too, having given his brother, John, the team coach, the task of relaxing Petchey for his return to singles. "I think a lot of people watching us practise might think we're not taking it seriously, but we are taking it very seriously," Lloyd said. "It's very important for Mark to feel relaxed, because he's a very tight person and in the past has tended to tense up on his serve a bit."

Today: Rusedski v Uih; Petchey v Bozic. Tomorrow: Rusedski and Broad v Uih and Krsinic. Sunday: Rusedski v Bozic; Petchey v Uih.

CRICKET: Yorkshire's openers undefeated as bad weather causes disjointed start to the County Championship

Run deluge for Vaughan and Moxon

DEREK HODGSON
reports from Cardiff
Yorkshire 316-0 v Glamorgan

Hours after Yorkshire had confirmed their interest in re-signing Sachin Tendulkar, one of the world's best batsmen, Martyn Moxon and Michael Vaughan were threatening the county's record stand against Glamorgan, 325 set 68 years ago by Maurice Leyland and Herbert Sutcliffe, at Huddersfield. Yorkshire will be talking to Tendulkar about another contract during the Texaco match at Leeds this month. He has mixed fortunes as their overseas player in 1992 but he was then only 19 and homesick; he returns as India's vice-captain, his status confirmed. Yorkshire will feel obliged to wait until they know Michael Bevan's intentions but he is unlikely to be omitted from Australia's tourists in 1997.

David Byas struck the first and possibly decisive blow in this match by winning his first test in the Championship and taking first knock on a slow, flat pitch and, surprisingly in view of the recent rain, a quick outfield. Glamorgan had to contend with a stiff, cold North-easter that had their symbol, the daffodil, ducking and weaving in the Gardens. It

was a raw day, under sultry cloud, to bowl or field.

When 15 runs came off the first seven deliveries Glamorgan sensed what to expect. Moxon was in fine fettle straight away, going on the back foot to hammer huge off-drives. Once Steve Watkins had found his rhythm, with the wind, he gave the 21-year-old Vaughan a rigorous examination, helping confine him to 11 runs in the first 17 overs. But the runs flowed, and flowed. Glamorgan tried six bowlers in the morning but without Otis Gibson, who has a groin strain, and Roland Leafebvre, retired, the attack is over dependent upon the invincible Watkins and helpful condition. A near run-out, by a throw from Steve James, and two nicks that dropped short of the slips, were their only encouragement all day.

Robert Croft tried flight to contain the pair, which was hard work, as Moxon reached his 43rd century in the 63rd over, Vaughan reached his century, his fourth, in the 71st. After tea, after three despatch cover drives off Adrian Dale in one over, Vaughan swept past his previous career best, 117 at Luton in 1994, and was first past 150, off 263 balls with 23 fours. Moxon had hit 18 fours and the pair were eight runs short of the record when bad light ended play 10 overs early.

New Zealand's ambition stifled by Ambrose

TONY COZIER
reports from St John's, Antigua
West Indies 548-7dec & 184
New Zealand 437 and 46-3

The West Indies' tension was evident in a bizarre morning. Ambrose might have been run out three times had not Chris Harris, New Zealand's best fielder, missed. There was also the mystifying sight of Ambrose shielding Courtney Walsh. (Fifth day of five: New Zealand won toss) WEST INDIES — First innings: 548 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88. NEW ZEALAND — First innings: 437 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Second innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Second innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Third innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Third innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fourth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fourth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fifth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fifth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Sixth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Sixth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Seventh innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Seventh innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Eighth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Eighth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Ninth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Ninth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Tenth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Tenth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Eleventh innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Eleventh innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Twelfth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Twelfth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Thirteenth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Thirteenth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fourteenth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fourteenth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fifteenth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fifteenth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Sixteenth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Sixteenth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Seventeenth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Seventeenth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Eighteenth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Eighteenth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Nineteenth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Nineteenth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Twentieth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Twentieth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Twenty-first innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Twenty-first innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Twenty-second innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Twenty-second innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Twenty-third innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Twenty-third innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Twenty-fourth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Twenty-fourth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Twenty-fifth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Twenty-fifth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Twenty-sixth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Twenty-sixth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Twenty-seventh innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Twenty-seventh innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Twenty-eighth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Twenty-eighth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Twenty-ninth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Twenty-ninth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Thirtieth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Thirtieth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Thirty-first innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Thirty-first innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Thirty-second innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Thirty-second innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

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WEST INDIES — Thirty-eighth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Thirty-eighth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Thirty-ninth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Thirty-ninth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fortieth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fortieth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Forty-first innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Forty-first innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Forty-second innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Forty-second innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Forty-third innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Forty-third innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Forty-fourth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Forty-fourth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Forty-fifth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Forty-fifth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

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NEW ZEALAND — Forty-sixth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Forty-seventh innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Forty-seventh innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

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NEW ZEALAND — Forty-eighth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Forty-ninth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Forty-ninth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fiftieth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fiftieth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fifty-first innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fifty-first innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fifty-second innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fifty-second innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fifty-third innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fifty-third innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fifty-fourth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fifty-fourth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fifty-fifth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fifty-fifth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fifty-sixth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fifty-sixth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fifty-seventh innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fifty-seventh innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fifty-eighth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fifty-eighth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Fifty-ninth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

NEW ZEALAND — Fifty-ninth innings: 46-3 for 1. J A Leach 103, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

WEST INDIES — Sixtieth innings: 184 for 7dec. C Harris 205, D N Patel 78, C M Spence 54, C Ambrose 5-88.

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SPORT

CRICKET Yorkshire
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FOOTBALL: Venables gives backing to his successor but refuses to rule himself out of a return to Lancaster Gate

Hoddle realises grand ambition

Fans are quick to express support

GLENN MOORE
Football Correspondent

He arrived by car, along the Bayswater Road, not by walking across the Serpentine, but Glenn Hoddle carried a conviction upon his appointment as England coach yesterday that suggests he believes miracles will not be required.

The 38-year-old made his bow with the same grace and economy that characterised his playing career. Faced with an audience of more than 100 reporters, 50 cameramen and 13 television crews Hoddle looked as if he has been preparing to lead England all his life.

Which is not surprising, because he has. "I have had a burning ambition to do this since I was a very young age," he said at his unveiling in a hotel near Hyde Park. "It is the only job, in England or abroad, which I would have left Chelsea for."

He has signed a four-year contract, estimated at close to £300,000 a year, which starts on 1 June. He will not, however, be actively involved with the England squad until after Euro 96. Terry Venables, understandably, wants the team to concentrate exclusively on the championships. The first scheduled fixture for Hoddle is a World Cup qualifier, away to Moldova, on 1 September.

Hoddle put an end to months of speculation and two days of indecision on Wednesday night. Having first been approached by Jimmy Armfield, the Football Association's adviser, some weeks ago, he was offered the job on Tuesday. Graham Kelly, the FA's chief executive, refused to go into detail about the timing of the offer, but it seems clear that Hoddle was spoken to before his club. Though his contract has less than a month to run, it was not the ideal way for the FA to go about the appointment even if they did not directly contravene any regulation.

The raising of this subject at yesterday's press conference clearly irked Kelly, but Hoddle, who sat between Kelly and Venables, seemed unconcerned. In general he looked relaxed but wary. No different, in fact, to his approach when dealing with the media after Chelsea matches.

Hoddle said: "It is a privilege and an honour. That is why I took it. My ambition is to be successful, the talent is there. There is a crop of exciting young play-

ers coming through which gives me the chance to do well. I want to do so in a manner which is close to my heart and, I believe, close to the public's as well."

Hoddle said the appointment would be "the pinnacle of any management career". His own started at 17, when he coached an Essex Sunday league side while still an apprentice at Tottenham. The experience, he said later, was useful but it was frustrating trying to explain ideas to players not good enough to understand them.

The same problem appeared to dog his early days at Chelsea but, this time, he will be dealing with players capable of putting his ideas into practice. Not only will they be the best the country had to offer, they have already been directed towards a more accomplished style by Venables.

"Terry's work has been a major influence in my taking over," Hoddle said. "It would have been wrong to come in if the tactics had been totally different. That would have been too drastic a change."

"The way Terry has been playing has been very brave at times. He knows exactly what he wants and the team now know what he wants. For me it is very exciting, the last two performances have been superb."

"Sometimes we admire what goes on across the channel and then raise eyebrows if we do it over here. I think people will accept it if we win."

Kelly confirmed: "We have preached continuity and we believe Glenn has similar football philosophies to Terry. He believes in intelligent players and raising the sophistication level of England players. Like Terry he is keen to bring players through the system playing a similar way throughout the teams, from youth to senior level."

Venables warmly approved Hoddle's appointment. "I coached him when he was in the under-21's and he was always keen to look at new things even then. I have not had much contact since but, when I had a meeting with the managers whose clubs had been in Europe we got talking and it was obvious we had thoughts along the same lines."

"I have said that I think it is an older man's job but that is a rule of thumb. When you begin talking about personalities, and about Glenn, I would say it is a good choice. He has experience



All smiles: Glenn Hoddle (left), with Terry Venables, the man he succeeds as England manager after Euro 96

abroad - and had it under a very good coach [Arsene Wenger at Monaco]. He has good football knowledge and is possibly one of the best players this country has ever had."

Hoddle returned the compliment by suggesting that, had Venables been England manager when he was playing, "he would have brought the best out of me". He also addressed the question of his own experience - he is 38, has been a manager for just five years, has not gained the FA's own coaching badge and has only won a pro-

motion through the play-offs. "I think the experience I've gained through management and as a player has been invaluable," Hoddle said. "If I did not feel ready for the job I would not have taken it. In this country experience is sometimes judged by grey hairs but that is not necessarily the case."

Hoddle will be back at work today, preparing Chelsea for Sunday's match with Blackburn Rovers. He intends to say a special goodbye to the supporters then - "it was heart-rending to leave," he added.

Then he will appoint his backroom staff - no clues as yet, but they are unlikely to include Venables' current assistant, Bryan Robson, who may be viewed as too much of an equal to Hoddle - and begin studying England's World Cup opponents and following their Euro 96 campaign. His task will be hard enough without great expectations be-

ing placed upon him. "If I was worried about the media scrutiny I would not have taken the job," he said. "Obviously it is a concern but it is up to me to deal with it. It is not a reason to turn the job down."

Then, with the cameras about to stop clicking and whirring, there was an intriguing postscript. Asked if he would one day like to return to coaching England, Venables said: "Yes, of course, I have made it very clear that I've enjoyed it. There have been difficult times but it is a privilege. If the chance came, I would consider it seriously - but not for four years."

That time is for Hoddle to make his mark. He will be 42 by then. Will he have put a fresh trophy into Lancaster Gate, or will he only have a head of grey hair to show for it? Wish him luck, for he will need good fortune as much as good judgement. More football, page 27

Gullit in line to fill Chelsea vacancy

Rand Gullit yesterday put himself in the frame to take over as the manager of Chelsea by declaring that he will not follow Glenn Hoddle into the England set-up.

The inspirational Dutchman, who was a free transfer signing from Sampdoria last summer, intends to complete the remaining year of his contract. "I will be staying," the 33-year-old Gullit said. "Chelsea want to continue playing the way we played this year. I will play as long as I enjoy it. That is my priority."

He also backed Hoddle's decision. "It is a great opportunity which does not come very often. I'm happy for him as a person,

even though it's a bit sad for Chelsea. If he had been going to another club, it would have been different."

Hoddle wants to turn Sunday's final game against Blackburn into a farewell party - for himself and the Chelsea fans. "I'd like to think there wouldn't be a problem," he said. "I'll be in training tomorrow and looking forward to preparing the side."

Colin Hutchinson, Chelsea's managing director, was "delighted for Glenn" but described his departure as a sad day for Chelsea. "It is a very emotional time," he said. "He has been an absolute joy to work with and we're all a bit down."

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

Clueless?

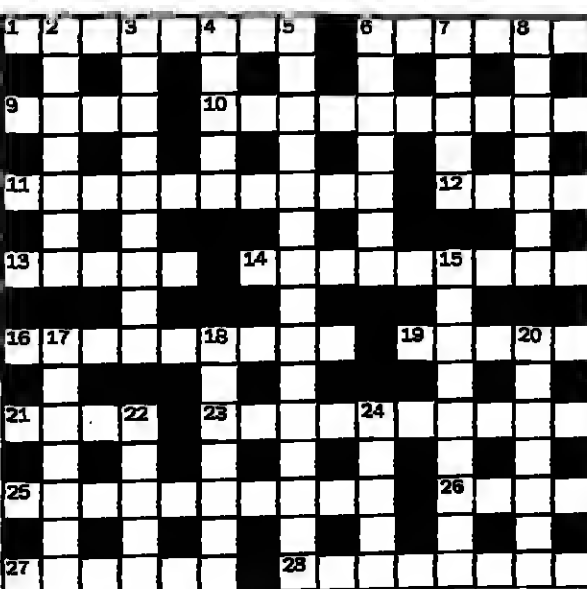
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No. 2977, Friday 3 May

By Phil

Thursday's Solution



ACROSS

- Certain to tick into boxes in defined quantities (8)
- Material at front lacks power? Put new material or front (6)
- Surprise trick left unfinished (4)
- Successful book presenting worst lines penned by prophet? (4-6)
- It illuminates student tackling into meal that's not sticky (10)
- Number enthrall by possessed worker (4)
- 13 and 14 Astronomical instrument possibly giving too precise length? (5,3)
- 16 and 19 Faced time to cut into fragile item of kitchen furniture? (9,5)
- Support losing sand ultimately could be finished (4)

- Ribald one implicated in end-of-court slur, possibly (10)
- Gone off-course? Board brings in independent, subject to discussion (10)
- Season of drawn matches, we hear (4)
- Against stung an American city within ravine (6)
- Shakespearean scene wrong to be located in English legend? (8)

DOWN

- Girl with heart to pester upset everyone (7)
- Spanish girl is another to be dancing (9)
- Non-conformist book depicted in some film (5)

- Be e.g. unbridled? That's quite wrong about leader in style - with this? (8,7)
- Run out with tailless dog for ride at Cruft's? (7)
- Movie cut most of the obscene material (5)
- Both, say, incline to enter contest (5-2)
- Imposter? Plan with one to ensure the French (9)
- Contest run in elevated atmosphere of French coast? (7)
- Loud is the sound, endlessly rising, indicating splitting (7)
- Wish one in mistake, removing black (7)
- Large marsupial - gosh! (5)
- Rushes studies when using the radio? (5)

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The essential seal of approval from No 10

Everybody seemed to have something to say about Glenn Hoddle's new job yesterday - from the Prime Minister to Hoddle's mum.

John Major - an ardent Chelsea fan - warmly welcomed the appointment. "Glenn Hoddle has done a remarkable job at Chelsea and he will certainly be missed there," Major said. "None the less, he is a great catch for England and I offer him my warmest congratulations on his appointment."

"England invented the game of soccer and it is about time we were on top of the world again. I hope Glenn Hoddle can achieve that."

Meanwhile, the woman who invented Glenn Hoddle, Mrs Terri Hoddle, was harbouring mixed feelings about the latest move in a footballing career which began with Potter Street Rangers in the Harlow Recreation League.

"I am very proud to think that he's been offered the job," she said. "But I'm a bit terrified at the same time."

The turnip potential of the England job was also one of the first considerations voiced by Osvaldo Ardiles, the Argentinean World Cup winner who played with Hoddle at Spurs between 1978 and 1987. "The job could destroy Glenn," he said. "I hope it doesn't happen."

But the former Tottenham manager believes Hoddle - and the Football Association - have made the right decision. "I know Glenn very well and I think this is an inspiring choice by the FA. He is his own man. He will do whatever is necessary. He has always been a very determined person with his own ideas and I think he will go for it."

"I think Glenn will get England playing with more flair

Mike Rowbottom canvasses opinion within the game and elsewhere on the new manager

than they have for the last 20 years. But he is realistic as well. He knows very, very well indeed that the result is important."

"The No 1 thing for any manager of a national team is to have played for the team. You can't get that knowledge any other way, and Glenn has done that. The fact that he has also played abroad as well can only be good for England."

"In some ways I envy Glenn, because managing a national team is the maximum and Glenn has always been very ambitious. Having said that, I don't envy him the other part of the job. England are expected to win all the time, and the press don't have any patience if they don't."

Ardiles believes, nevertheless, that Hoddle should have sufficient inner strength to cope with the job. "Over the years, some people have thought that Glenn is soft, but I can assure you that he's nothing of the kind. He is a very hard man. You don't survive as long as he has at the top level being soft."

Ray Clemence, another former Spurs team-mate of Hoddle's, endorsed Ardiles's assessment. "Glenn knows about the public glare and I'm sure he's talked it all over with his family and friends. And more than anything else, when it comes to a job like this, you've got to want it - Glenn obviously does."

Manchester City's manager, Alan Ball, also welcomed the appointment. "Glenn already has a wealth of international experience

as a player, so he will know what the job entails in advance," he said.

Gary Lineker, who played with Hoddle during the 1988 European Championships, expressed regret that there would be no continued role for the current England coach, Terry Venables, after Euro 96.

"I think most of us would like Terry Venables to continue, but the people involved have backed themselves into their various corners. If a new appointment has to be made, and that's been the case, then I am delighted it is Glenn Hoddle. Anyone who has seen Chelsea's style of football this season will be happy with that. If we are to be successful in Europe, we have to play the sort of game Glenn has tried to play with Chelsea."

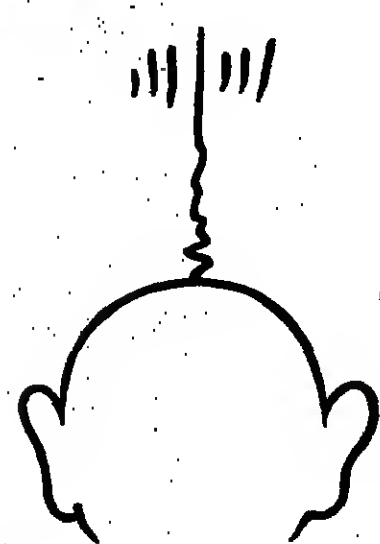
Lineker said Hoddle commands respect straight away with players because he was such an exceptionally talented performer himself. "If he had been around now, he would have added quite significantly to his number of caps because the team would have been built around him."

The announcement will have lifted the spirits of Southampton's gifted midfielder Matthew Le Tissier who, like Hoddle, has found himself left out of the England team despite having a huge number of supporters.

Le Tissier, a transfer target for Hoddle during his time at Chelsea, said: "Glenn Hoddle was my hero as a boy, someone I have admired for a long time. If he is the England manager, that's a different matter."

The case may be altered for Le Tissier, for Hoddle it certainly is. However things turn out for Harlow's favourite son, he has come a long way from Potter Street.

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